

THE NO. 1 MISTAKE CRIME VICTIMS MAKE PAGE 70

HOME DEFENDER

THE ULTIMATE GUIDE TO PERSONAL SAFETY



**BEST
DEFENSIVE
AMMO
OPTIONS**



**HOW
SOCIAL MEDIA
CONTRIBUTES TO
CRIME PAGE 88**

**SHOOT
BETTER TODAY...
DRILLS
THE PROS USE**

**7 MUST-HAVE
ITEMS FOR
HOME DEFENSE**

**EXCLUSIVE
Q&A'S**

• EX-BURGLAR
REVEALS WHO,
WHY HE TARGETED
• HOW A VICTIM
FOUGHT BACK

**SELF-DEFENSE
TIPS**
WHICH STRIKES
TO USE, WHICH
TO AVOID

**SIDEWINDER
VENOM**
RAPID RELOADS,
INCREASED CAPACITY

PLUS: NEW PRODUCTS | HANDGUNS | SHOTGUNS | and More

FROM THE EDITORS OF WORLD OF FIREPOWER
SPRING 2015
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CONCEAL AND CARRY THE CROSS



BEDSIDE BACKUP



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IN THE 

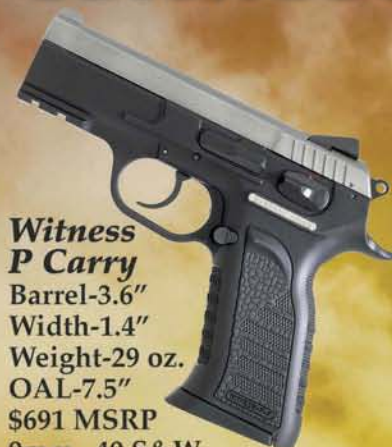
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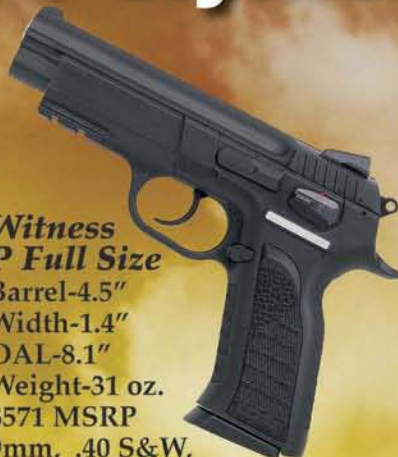
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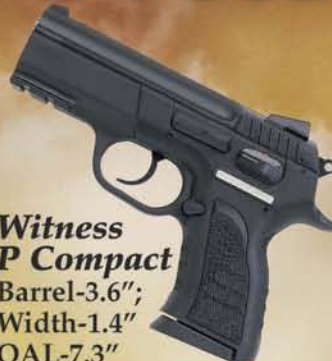
Arm Yourself...with Witness Polymer Protection



**Witness
P Carry**
Barrel-3.6"
Width-1.4"
Weight-29 oz.
OAL-7.5"
\$691 MSRP
9mm, .40 S&W,
.45 ACP, 10mm



**Witness
P Full Size**
Barrel-4.5"
Width-1.4"
OAL-8.1"
Weight-31 oz.
\$571 MSRP
9mm, .40 S&W,
.45 ACP, 10mm, .
38 Sup, .45/.22LR



**Witness
P Compact**
Barrel-3.6";
Width-1.4"
OAL-7.3"
Weight-28 oz.
\$571 MSRP
9mm, .40 S&W,
.45 ACP, 10mm



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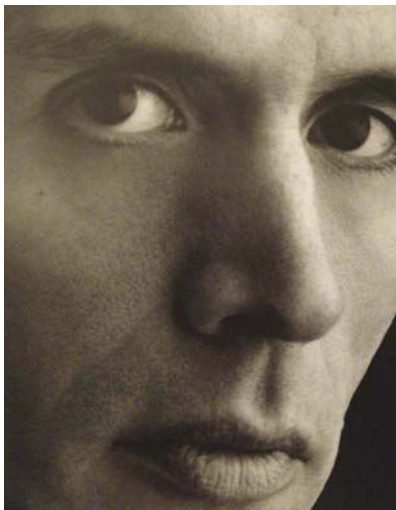
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THE COVER
Photo: Adaptive Tactical/Eric Rose
Designer: Johann Frederick Mendoza



Is It Luck ... or Something Else?

By Kerry Michael Li



So far, I've been lucky.

I've never been robbed and my home has never been broken into. But is it really luck... or just preparation?

By nature, I'm basically a trusting person. But I still lock my door whenever I leave my home, and I've always left lights on at night when I'm gone to make it look like somebody's home, which I did even when I was a kid.

I've always lived in large metropolitan areas. When traveling to the countryside to Lake Michigan or the Catskill Mountains as a child, I always thought it was strange that people would leave their doors unlocked, especially when it was dark. I guess growing up with "Big City Values" taught me security concerns automatically: always lock your doors, don't talk to strangers, avoid dark alleys—common sense stuff.

But these days, with the proliferation of technology and rampant cybercrime, it seems like we're under some sort of a real threat all the time. Is it safe to use my ATM card? Is somebody spying on me? Is my identity safe? It's daunting, really.

I started martial arts training young (in the 1970s, after the movie "Billy Jack" came out). So I've had a "defensive" mindset for most of my

life. We had an adage in my old dojo: "You don't start fights, you finish them." What does that mean? It means you should avoid altercations, not look for them. It means following your gut instincts when you feel threatened and react to them.

I've noticed the same pattern when it comes to home defense. I don't want to be robbed, but I'm prepared for it. I have alarms, I'm armed, I'm trained in tactical shooting. Does that mean trouble will eventually find me because I've accepted the possibility of it happening to me? By the same logic, I guess I'm going to get sick by going to the doctor for a checkup or get in a car accident because I buckled up. So, no, being prepared for the worst doesn't mean the worst will happen.

But if it did... are you ready for it?

“These days it seems like we're under some sort of a real threat all the time.”

IN THIS ISSUE

Speaking of worst-case scenarios, in this issue we highlight both causing and being on the receiving end of a burglary. We spoke to a victim who offers real insight into this nightmare. You can benefit from his insights and his mistakes.

I also got to interview a home burglar who has never been caught (for real). I learned a lot from him, and I let his words speak for himself. And you know what's the scariest thing of all? He's a really nice guy. I actually enjoyed interviewing him. You would never know what he used to do because he doesn't fit the "stereotype" of a criminal. He's just another guy, like you and me, trying to make a living.

And when I was done talking to him, I went straight home and upped my security and made sure he doesn't know where I live.

You know... prepare for the worst.

HOME DEFENDER

SPRING 2015

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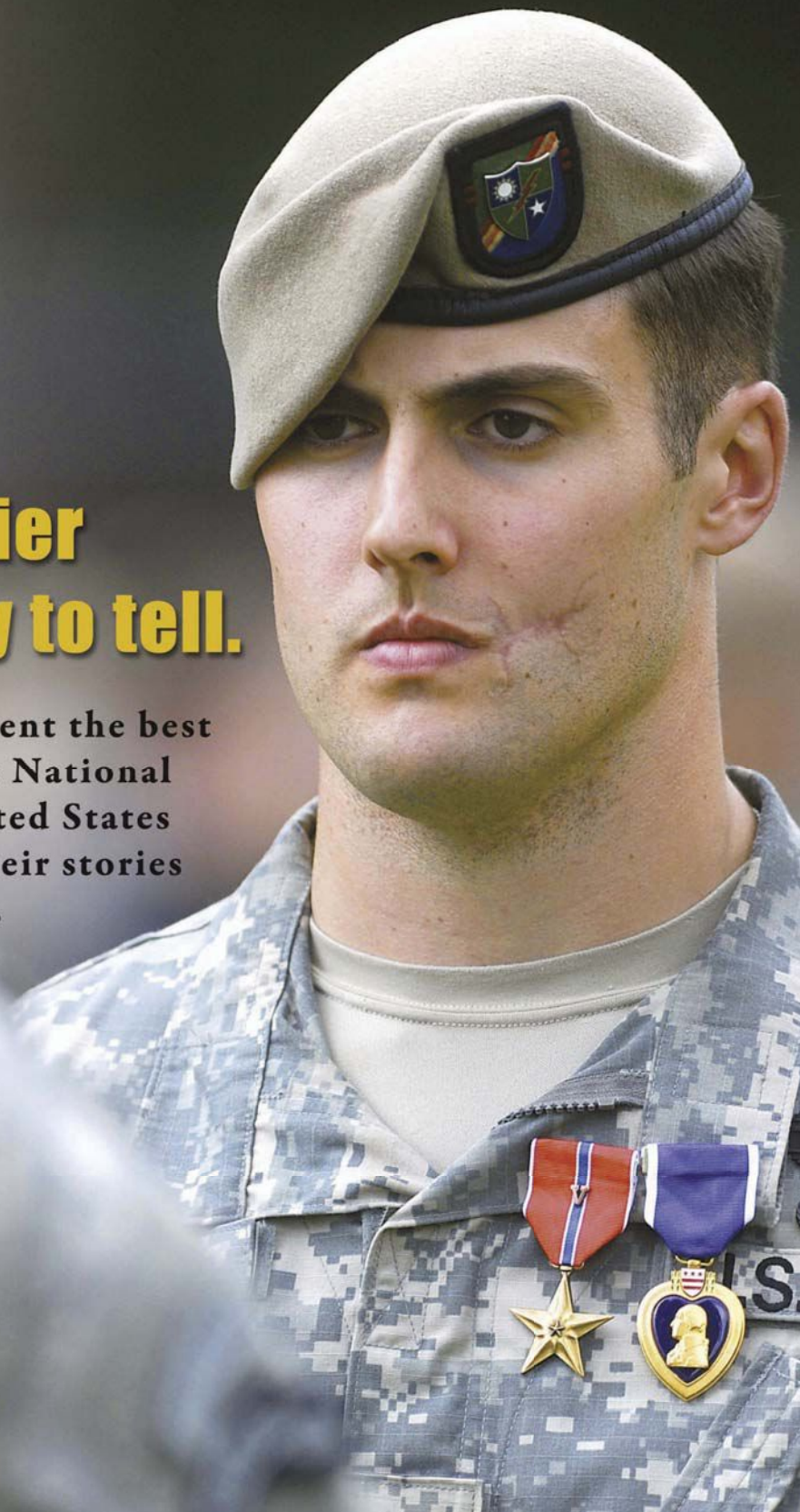
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THINKSTOCK



ARE YOU SURROUNDED? SECURITY TIPS FOR APARTMENT LIVING

Due to the rise in population, large apartment buildings and multi-use buildings that integrate residential apartments with commercial storefront offices or stores seem to be popping up everywhere.

Securing your living space can prove challenging, especially when you live in a busy building with people coming in and out at all hours of the day.

Here are a few tips and guidelines that might make you a little safer:

Secure Lobby – Apartment buildings, which have unit doors that open into interior hallways, will generally have a lobby. The lobby doors should be locked from the outside at all times, unless there's a receptionist or security guard present. To restrict entry into the building, a swipe card or fob is better than an old-fashioned lock and key system. There are three main advantages

to having a card or fob system: first, they can be deactivated when lost or stolen; second, when the user swipes their card or fob, an electronic record is created and can easily be tracked; and finally, cards can be programmed to restrict access at certain times of the day for building maintenance personnel. In addition, telephone-entry system should be installed for visitors and delivery people to contact residents so they can be either buzzed in or met by residents.

Hardware – First, you should make sure that you have a dead-bolt on your door. Some door-knob locks can be breached very easily by slipping a credit card to catch the latch and then pushing the door open. Hinges should be placed on the interior of the door, not the exterior. Even if you live in a building with a secure lobby or security door, you should insist on having your hinges moved to the interior. It's important to have a doorframe that's not made of

wood, but steel. Steel frames are nearly impossible to kick in.

Lighting – Don't underestimate the dangers of having a burnt-out light bulb, especially in common areas like the laundry room, parking garages or elevator lobbies. Darkness is a predator's best friend. Report any outages to the building manager or maintenance. Exterior lights should either be activated by a timer or have motion sensors.

Property Maintenance – One of the benefits of living in a larger apartment building is that they have onsite managers whose job is to manage the maintenance of the building. If you see a broken window, screen, lights or gate locks, let your building manager know immediately. Properties in disrepair attract criminals because they show that the owners and residents don't pay attention or care about the property. In that instance, criminals know that the probability of finding a weak point will be greater than in a well-maintained building.



INSTALLING SECURITY CAMERAS TO USE OR NOT TO USE – THAT’S THE QUESTION

A Houston, Texas, homeowner discovered that mounting security cameras was not much of a deterrent.

At 9:45 p.m. on a Thursday night, cameras clearly show an intruder hopping over the fence. Although his first attempt was unsuccessful, the burglar persisted.

Later video shows the perpetrator skulking around the patio and then entering the home. Once he gained access to the house, which had lights and a TV on, he made his way up the stairs. He entered a bedroom where one of the homeowners was asleep and quickly took a

wallet and watch. Before exiting the house, he also stole a laptop and some food. The man is still at large but police are hoping the surveillance footage will eventually lead them to an arrest. The homeowners are in the process of adding more cameras.

On the other hand, a Louisville, Kentucky, man, watched from his phone as an intruder entered his home through an unlocked sliding glass door.

The burglar spotted one of the surveillance cameras and turned it around. But he didn't know that there were two other cameras still rolling.

The owner of the house was eating dinner nearby when his Dropcam security system sent a warning to his smartphone that his sliding door had been

opened. He watched as the perpetrator proceeded to take his electronic equipment.

The owner was able to yell at the invader by using his smartphone to tap into the camera's speakers. He warned the intruder to leave his home in hopes of scaring the alleged criminal off.

And it worked.

Because of the surveillance footage, the police quickly arrested the alleged burglar, who was held on \$25,000 bail.

Dropcam Smartphone

App: Free

Mounted Cameras: \$150

Catching a criminal while you're out having dinner:

Priceless.

Source: ABC News

FIGHTING GRANNIES NEVER TOO OLD TO FIGHT BACK

Criminals beware. Even brave grandmothers have managed to fend off intruders.

Granny #1: In Houston, an 83-year-old Houston woman went to put clothes in the laundry when she noticed that her belongings were out of place and her window was wide open. The victim heard a man's voice demanding money. Instead of telling him where the money was, she exclaimed, "What kind of momma you got that raised you up like this? You ought to be ashamed of yourself."

The burglar then attempted to choke her. The victim reached for a stick and began striking him with it. Then she remembered that she had some sausage cooking on the stove and followed up her strikes by pouring hot water on him.

The burglar quickly retreated.

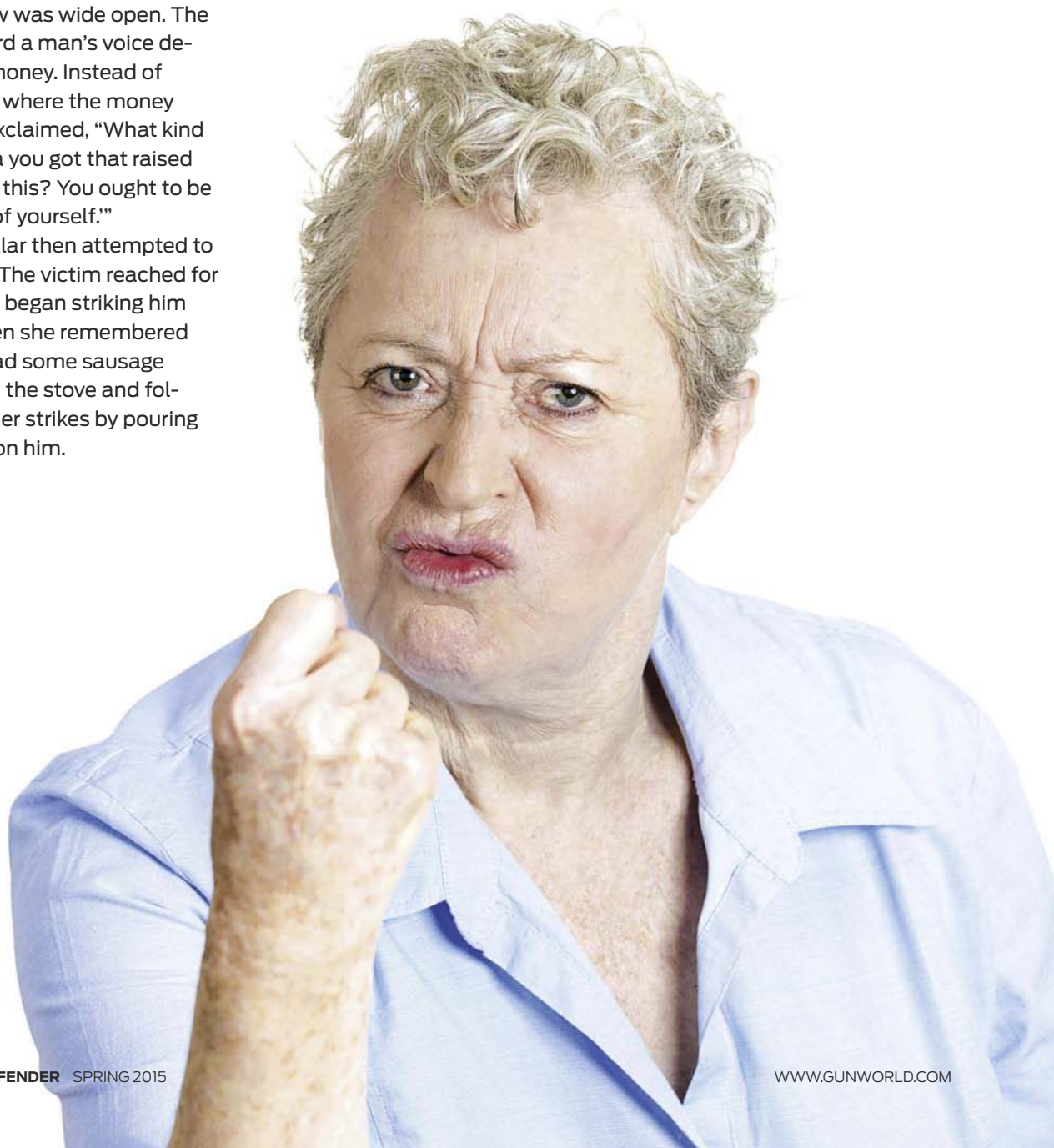
Granny #2: While in Liverpool, England, a 101-year-old woman was tricked into inviting a female intruder inside who asked to use the phone. Once inside, the female intruder ordered the elderly woman to give her money.

When the elderly woman didn't comply, the female intruder proceeded to snatch the victim's purse. But the old

woman clutched her purse while ordering the intruder to leave. Frustrated, the female intruder left.

Police have heralded the lady as having "remarkable spirit." The elderly woman was upset by the ordeal but only suffered minor abrasions to her arms.

Sources: ABC News and BBC News





8 SIMPLE TIPS AVOID TROUBLE WHEN YOU VENTURE OUT

Experienced criminals roam the streets in search of easy marks. Here are a few tips to avoid being caught in their crosshairs:

Don't dress like a chump – If you dress like a tourist or wear a lot of bling (i.e. fancy jewelry or expensive watches), you are basically painting a target on your back.

Stay in well-lit places and crowds – In other words, don't take the shortcut through the deserted alley or unlit park. Stick to major streets with lots of people.

Plan your route – Muggers often strike when tourists get lost and bury their noses in a map. If you memorize the way to your destination, you can walk with a sense of purpose.

Avoid the bad parts of town – If you aren't sure where the bad neighborhoods are, talk to the locals. Someone will tell you which parts of town to avoid.

Travel in groups – Just like in the wild, groups are harder to prey on.

Try riding a bike – When riding a bike, it's much harder to be confronted than a pedestrian, mainly because you're going faster.

Be alert – Simple distractions such as listening to music on earbuds, talking on the phone or reading a map can make you a target. Always be aware of your surroundings.

Listen to your instincts – Fight Or Flight is built into all of us. If you have a sense that someone is following you or you are being watched, then act on it. Seek refuge in a crowded restaurant or street. Make noise or call for help.

Don't be afraid to attract attention. **HD**

DO YOU LIVE HERE? CITIES WITH HIGHEST BURGLARY RATES

Fayetteville, NC – 1,827.4
Flint, MI – 1,448.4
Toledo, OH – 1,389.5
Little Rock, AR – 1,379.9
Memphis, TN – 1,303.3
Montgomery, AL – 1,389.8
Bakersfield, CA – 1,271.6
Spokane, WA – 1,239.1
Winston-Salem, NC – 1,220.8
Columbus, GA – 1,211.0



Total Preparation

By Bob Campbell

Secure Your Home Defense With These **14** Products that a Retired Law Enforcement Officer Recommends

Maybe you have your high-capacity handgun. You have practiced and you have a suitable holster for daily use.

But the demands of home defense are different. Do you have a less lethal option? Do you have a laser aiming device or a combat light? You will probably be fighting in dim to no light.

Do you have a first aid kit? Things may get bad quickly and you do not wish to win the battle and lose the war. The following guide will introduce you to some of the best new products available for personal defense. Saddle up!



M 21

Company: Columbia River Knife and Tool

MSRP: \$135.00

Website: Crkt.com

DESCRIPTION

No matter what your walk of life, you need an edged tool. For the tactical minded, a superior edged tool must be at the top of the list. A folder with a positive locking mechanism and rapid opening device gets our attention.

The M 21 offers a degree of safety not found in the day of the slip lock. The AutoLawks system and dual hilt are safety features, but the rapid opening ability of the knife is never compromised. The M21 was designed by retired Sgt. Major Kit Carson. He says he designed this knife for heavy-duty use because they do not call them the "Sorta Special Forces."

QUICK SPECS

- Open Length: 9.25 inches
- Closed Length 5.3 inches

98150

Company: Hornady Manufacturing

MSRP: \$276.50

Website: Hornady.com

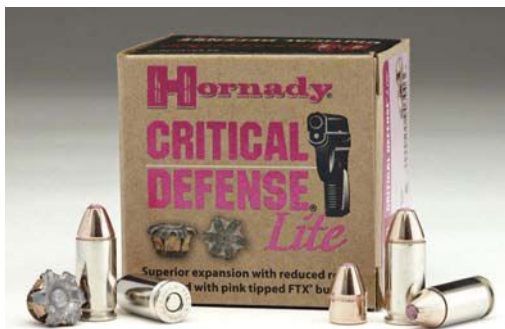
DESCRIPTION

The Hornady RAPiD Safe is a home defense item that cannot be ignored. While a 24-gun safe offers security, rapid access is needed for home defense.

A personal handgun safe answers this need. With an increasing number of jurisdictions demanding the handgun be secured in the home, the Rapid Safe is a desirable device. The RAPiD Safe may be opened with an RFID bracelet, car or key fob, or a programmed code. A key lock may be used in the unlikely event the 110-volt powered system goes down. Overall, it's vault-tough in a compact package.

QUICK SPECS

- Exterior: 15½ inches by 9 inches by 3½ inches
- Interior: 11 inches by 8 inches by 3 inches
- Weight: 15.65 pounds



90840

Company: Hornady Manufacturing

MSRP: \$28.12

Website: Hornady.com

DESCRIPTION

Hornady's Critical Defense bullet has been proven in rigorous testing. Now, Critical Defense Lite 9mm offers an effective reduced recoil option.

This load maintains a balance between penetration and expansion not possible in a light for the caliber bullet before the advent of modern Critical Defense technology. The Critical Defense Lite maintains 10 inches of penetration in ballistic gelatin while expanding and maintaining bullet integrity. This load is an excellent choice for compact handguns in particular.

QUICK SPECS

- Average Velocity: 1,125 fps
- Penetration: 10 inches
- Expansion: .58 inch



TACTICAL GLOVES SOG-L50

Company: Safariland

MSRP: \$50.53

Website: SafariLand.com

DESCRIPTION

If you're using a tactical firearm, sometimes the AR-15 quad rail or even the forend of a pump shotgun may abrade the palm.

We like to use gloves in training and a set kept near the tactical firearm is a big plus. However, you cannot use department store gloves for tactical manipulation. The Tactical Shorty glove offered by Hatch allows unlimited wrist movement and never interferes with control of the firearm.

In many cases control is actually enhanced by wearing tight-fitting gloves in inclement weather. Posi-grip non-skid surfaces are a Hatch advantage.

QUICK SPECS

- Kevlar construction
- Cut resistant
- Heat and flash protection
- Elasticized wrist
- PosiGrip for weapon retention

HOLSTER J-122

Company: Jason Winnie Leathergoods

MSRP: \$94.99

Website: JasonWinnie.com

DESCRIPTION

A good inside-the-waistband holster must incorporate several design features that are not debatable. A reinforced holstering mouth or welt, a strong spine and belt loops that securely fix the holster to the gunbelt.

The Jason Winnie IWB holster delivers with more than a little style. Crafted from high-grade leather the old fashioned way, this is a good kit that makes the professional grade.

QUICK SPECS

- Reinforced holstering welt
- Dual belt loops
- Well molded
- Double stitched



BEDSIDE BACKUP

Company: Crossbreed Holsters

MSRP: \$73.95

Website: CrossbreedHolsters.com

DESCRIPTION

Many of us carry a handgun during the day in a quality holster, but are lost when it comes to keeping the handgun ready at night.

Laying the handgun on the nightstand or shoving it between the mattress and box springs is not ideal. The modular Bedside Backup has a component that slips between the mattress and box springs for stability, but offers a rapid draw from a well-designed holster.

A handgun stored in the same manner may be difficult to draw if you're leaning on the mattress. The rig comes with one Ohai modular holster and the holster components may be easily changed.

QUICK SPECS

- Modular holster included
- Product Size: 13.25 inches by 1.50 inches by 9 inches
- Product Weight: 15.0 ounces



TAC 300

Company: Bayco Products

MSRP: \$37.99

Website: BaycoProducts.com

DESCRIPTION

You have to have a light—and a compact portable light that will not shatter if dropped should be at the top of the list.

With a polymer frame, LED-light powered by lithium batteries and a deep parabolic reflector to provide a useful beam to 190 meters at a powerful 180 lumens, there's much to recommend here. The TAC 300 series offers a lot of power for the modest price.

QUICK SPECS

- Sharp focused beam
- Non slip grip
- Large textured switch with momentary option
- Waterproof

BATON

Company: ASP

MSRP: \$110.50

Website: Asp-Usa.com

DESCRIPTION

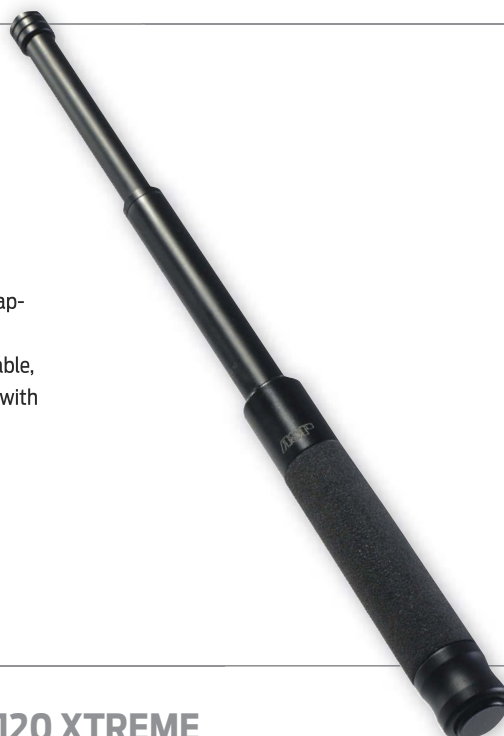
Everyone needs a less than lethal response. In the home, gunfire may not be appropriate.

Learn the various locks and tactics for the ASP baton and you will have a reliable, effective and handy home defender. ASP set the standards for a baton that opens with a rapid wrist motion and closes simply by forcing the top against a hard surface.

Workmanship, design and execution are tactical grade.

QUICK SPECS

- Open length: 15.75 inches
- Weight: 16.3 ounces



XT 120 XTREME TACTICAL FLASHLIGHT

Company: Burris

MSRP: \$209.99

Website: MidwayUsa.com

DESCRIPTION

If you're going to use your handgun for home defense, you need to marry it to a combat light.

If the firearm is a modern rail gun, then there's no good reason not to mount the light for home and night operation. The Burris XT 120 Xtreme Tactical Flashlight features a Xenon bulb and a 123A Lithium battery. The Burris is a snug fit on Picatinny or Glock rails and offers excellent illumination.

QUICK SPECS

- 120 Lumens
- Ambidextrous controls



TBLIR

Company: Mission First Tactical

MSRP: \$59.99

Website: MissionFirstTactical.com

DESCRIPTION

The Torch Backup Light is a rugged and effective yet affordable tool. This tool is designed as a backup to the primary illumination and the output is 10 lumens. For looking over locks, examining alarm pads, and other chores necessary without giving the location of the homeowner away, the Torch is an effective device that mounts on the Picatinny rail.

The Torch series is available in combination of red and white light or red and white alone.

QUICK SPECS

- Output: 10 lumens
- Weight: 22 grams

X5L

Company: Viridian Green Laser Sights

MSRP: \$409.00

Website: ViridianGreenLaser.com

DESCRIPTION

Viridian calls their green laser a "a big surprise for bad guys." We could not agree more.

The Green Laser is designed to cut through darkness indoors and out. The light is actually programmable for a number of custom models of operation. You may adjust the modes as desired to keep the advantage on your side.

QUICK SPECS

- Beam intensity: 160 lumens continuous, 190 lumens in strobe mode
- Beam divergence: .5 inch at 50 feet
- Weight: 3.3 ounces



BDR-C-HSL TACTICAL BLUE DOT SERIES 340

Company: Brite Strike

MSRP: \$136.30

Website: Brite-Strike.com

DESCRIPTION

Tactical illumination is serious business. The Brite Strike light is in use with professionals in the police and military. The ultra-strong body is CNC control machined from a single billet or aircraft-grade aluminum.

The black finish meets Mil-Spec requirements. A crenelated strike crown is an important feature for close quarters combat and to protect the lens if the light is dropped. This is a highly rated light by the National Tactical Officers Association.

QUICK SPECS

- Maximum output: 340 Lumens
- Run time: 2.5 hours, high output to 8+ hours, low output
- Length: 5.2 inches





GRIZZLY

Company: Adventure Medical Kits

MSRP: \$125

Website: AdventureMedicalKits.com

DESCRIPTION

It's an unpleasant reality that we must be prepared for bodily injury to ourselves or our loved ones. If you're in a fistfight, you will be hit. If you're in a knife fight, you will be cut, and if you're in a gunfight, you may be shot.

The Grizzly is just one kit, but the one we find fits most common and serious injuries. Penetration wounds and also compression fractures may be treated. You need to have something to handle severe bleeding, such as the QuickClot or the battle may be lost.

QUICK SPECS

- Size: 11 inches by 8 inches by 3 inches
- Weight: 2 pounds, 6 ounces

.38 SPECIAL

Company: Liberty Ammunition

MSRP: \$29.99

Website: LibertyAmmo.com

DESCRIPTION

Over penetration is always a concern for home defense.

With that understanding—and the need to maintain cartridge integrity and accuracy—Liberty Defense has introduced their Civil Defense loads.

The .38 Special loading breaks 1,500 fps from most handgun barrels. This is a lead-free bullet designed to fragment in the attacker's body. It's also designed to break up on heavy resistance.

QUICK SPECS

- 20 rounds per box
- Accuracy in service grade handguns : 2 inches at 25 yards







TERRILL HOFFMAN

The Sidewinder Venom

By Terrill Hoffman

The time may come when prevention isn't enough protection. The criminal may force the action—but you should control the outcome.

Anytime we're discussing home defense, the conversation can usually be broken down into three segments: First, we should start by reviewing procedures to make our homes a less desirable target for the criminal; Second, from that point, we may even look at various alarm systems and other methods of warning should someone actually try to invade our homes; Lastly, just about any conversation on home defense is going to evolve to the point where we are discussing various weapons up to and including firearms.

Unfortunately, too many people skip the first two steps and go right to the more interesting topic of firearms. Even I will admit that talking about a handgun, rifle or shotgun has more appeal than thinking about cutting back shrubbery or adding exterior lights, but I cannot overstate the importance of trying to prevent the crime before it happens.

However, once someone has gained access to the interior of the house, we're forced to consider the best way to stop the threat and to protect ourselves. We may debate what the best "self-defense" weapon is, but if you ask Vice President Biden, he will tell you to get a shotgun. In an effort to give our V.P. the best chance of being right this time around, we have decided to review the products of Adaptive Tactical LLC.



There are very few firearms that have the intimidation factor of a shotgun.

“The additional advantage of the 10-round magazines is also obvious. The capacity of the shotgun is increased by 66-100 percent.”

ADAPTIVE TACTICAL

Adaptive Tactical, based in Idaho, has dedicated themselves to taking what many would consider the best choice for self-defense, the pump-action shotgun, and enhancing its defensive capabilities.

Using the latest in polymer engineering, Adaptive Tactical has focused on improving the speed, performance and versatility of the 590, 500 and 88 series Mossberg shotguns.

When it comes to pump-action shotguns, the various Mossberg and Remington models have always been considered the most reliable and neither manufacturer can really claim a great advantage over the other. However,

Adaptive Tactical has chosen the Mossberg models for its method of fitting the standard magazine tube, which allows a predictable result in their modifications.

SIDEWINDER VENOM

To fully understand the conversion work of Adaptive Tactical, you need to look at their modifications to the pump-action Mossberg in creating their Sidewinder Venom model.

The most obvious change is the conversion of the shotgun from a tube-feed to a magazine-feed weapon. The standard five- or six-round tube is removed and replaced with a mounting block (magazine well), enabling the insertion of a five-round “stick”

magazine or a 10-round rotary “drum” magazine.

If you’re wondering why you would want to replace a five-round tube with a five-round stick magazine, just consider the speed of reloading. The standard configuration requires single loading of each shell—but with the new magazine—you can load five rounds in one action.

The additional advantage of the 10-round magazines is also obvious. The capacity of the shotgun is increased by 66-100 percent.

In the conversion process, the forearm of the shotgun is replaced with a polymer version, which improves the grip over standard designs. The forearm

also has a pronounced lip at the rear to prevent your hand from slipping during the charging cycle. A “Kelly Grip” is also supplied and can be mounted in a horizontal or 45-degree angle to the forearm for either a left-hand or right-hand position.

At this point, the options for the magazine modification get interesting. A Mossberg Series 88 with the Sidewinder Venom magazine conversion can be ordered in a five-round unit with a pistol grip butt stock, or as a 10-round rotary drum unit with an M4 style buttstock.

PRODUCT EVALUATION

All of us have seen claims being made in a brochure or website which offer the “latest and greatest” improvements on just about every product known to man.

However, when it comes to your chosen self-defense weapon, you want a little more “show me” before you jump on the bandwagon. For this reason, when I spoke to Adaptive Tactical, I requested the chance to handle and fire one of their shotguns. They went a step further by sending in a Sidewinder Venom Mossberg and a sample of the 10-round rotary kit.

Because the kit included the polymer forearm, they had installed a new style forearm on the shotgun that they are planning on introducing shortly. I also found a new 10-round “stick” magazine to go with the five-round magazine and the 10-round rotary drum.

The foundation of the Sidewinder Venom was a Mossberg Maverick Model 88. The 18 ½-inch barrel has a Cylinder Bore

designed for 2 ¾- or 3-inch shells. At this point it should be noted that the magazines are all sized for 2 ¾-inch shells. In a home defense situation I see no sense in the use of the longer 3-inch shells, because the standard confrontation takes place at a distance measured in feet instead of yards.

If you really have a great urge to use 3-inch shells, they will have to be hand fed directly in the barrel one at a time. Before I even thought about loading and shooting the weapon, I went over the firearm to see the features the Venom conversion offered to the basic Maverick. The safety and slide release were in the same spot as before, but I did notice one drawback to the addition of the M4 butt stock with its pistol grip—the slide release must be operated with your



An M4 style butt stock with pistol grip can be ordered on a completed.

support hand and cannot be reached with your dominant hand. In the long-term scheme of things, this may require a modification to your training. This would not be a problem with a firearm fitted with the magazine conversion sans the M4 butt stock.

In looking at each magazine I was impressed with how robust they felt. The material used and the thickness of the walls led me to believe that they would stand up well to constant use and actually being dropped during reloading drills. The magazines are loaded in the shotgun similar to the method used to load an AK magazine. The forward section of the magazine is inserted at an angle where it catches a protrusion in the front of the magazine

well and then it's rocked to rear to lock in place.

A paddle at the rear of the well will release the magazine, and it will drop free. There was nothing flimsy about how the magazines locked in place and they all fit securely. While on the subject of the magazines, it should be mentioned that the springs are not going to remind you of an AR or AK. As with the body of the magazine, the springs were rather stout.

In the instruction supplied with both the kit and the shotgun, it was mentioned that care should be taken while loading rounds into the magazine. You want to make sure that the brass rim on each round fits just forward of the brass rim of the previous loaded round. Once the shells

are loaded into the magazine they can be removed by depressing a lever on the side. While doing so just remember the strength of the spring.

The first time I tried this feature I did not have my hand in place to catch the shells and sent them flying across the room. I also realized that the magazine system not only speeds the process of loading a shotgun, but it also speeds the process of unloading.

Both the new "standard" handguard and the latest designed handguard felt comfortable and even though they supplied a firm grip they did not abrade my hand even under heavy usage. Maybe I'm old fashioned, but I chose not to try using the addition vertical grip. The



This new style with the overhead rail should be available soon.

new style forearm that Adaptive Tactical is coming out with has a bridge which rides over the barrel and provided a Picatinny rail-type mount for a laser, red dot, or white light.

My first impression was that this unit looked a bit bulky, and it wasn't until I mounted a 200-lumen light to the rail that I saw the benefit of this system. The arch is great enough that it does not interfere with the function or use of the front sight, but it posi-

tioned the flashlight to where it gave perfect illumination of the front sight as well as the intended target in total darkness.

Although the M4-style buttstock and combined pistol grip did hinder reaching the slide release, the four positions of adjustment were a bonus. The length of pull was easily adjusted from one shooter to the next. The soft 1-inch recoil pad was a blessing during all of the shooting drills.

ADAPTIVE TACTICAL SIDEWINDER VENOM

SPECIFICATIONS

- Mossberg Maverick Model 88
- Gauge: 2 ¾ inch 12 GA
- Capacity: 5 or 10 rounds
- Average weight: 8.71 pounds
- Barrel length: 18.5 inches
- Overall length: 36.43 to 39.43 inches
- Choke: Cylinder Bore



Go for the max
and get the
10-round drum.

“Rapid reloads
and increased
capacity have their
advantages.”



The heart of the Sidewinder Venom is the Mossberg pump-action shotgun.

THE SHOOTING LINE

After owning a Mossberg 500 for well over a decade, I have a great deal of faith in the reliability of Mossberg shotguns. What concerned me was if any of the modifications would affect the function of the shotgun.

After running through several 20-round boxes of standard bird-shot, my worries were proven unfounded. Again, I will note my appreciation of the recoil pad. I also fired several drills using OO buckshot at close range (20 feet and less) because that's the longest distance you will encounter in the average home. After all, we're discussing a defensive weapon and not a shotgun designed for bird hunting.

I did notice that at 20 feet the impact of the pellets were about six inches higher than the point of aim. I also noted that at that distance the total spread of the 18 pellets for two shots was only seven inches. Contrary to what some may believe, you still need to aim while using a shotgun. The difference in point of aim and point of impact was a result of the decrease in drop with the M4 buttstock over the standard Mossberg stock. Function was

100 percent! I even tried to intentionally twist the forearm while racking the slide and could not get the shotgun to bind or fail to feed.

SPEW VENOM

If you decide to take the advice of our V.P. and countless others to arm yourself with a pump-action shotgun, consider the modifications offered with the Sidewinder Venom. Rapid reloads and increased capacity have their advantages. Mossberg has earned their remarkable reputation and Adaptive Tactical only enhances the basic package.

Discuss the first two aspects of home defense and then enjoy a conversation about firearms. Also, don't forget to discuss the fourth aspect of home defense—how do you handle the situation after you have been forced to use a firearm? **HD**

Terrill Hoffman, a lifelong firearm enthusiast, is a contributing editor for World of Firepower magazine. He's a professional photographer by trade and a writer by passion.

OWN A MOSSBERG SHOTGUN ALREADY? NO PROBLEM

Customers who already own a Mossberg can order a kit from Adaptive Tactical to convert their weapon to the five-round model, the 10-round model, or the 10-round model with the M4 buttstock.

If that wasn't enough, they also offer the service of allowing you to send in your shotgun and they will modify it for you. Reach them at AdaptiveTactical.com.

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American Survival Guide

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THINKSTOCK

They say a man's home is his castle. If you're looking to defend it, you can't go wrong with the sheer firepower of a shotgun.

It's no coincidence shotguns are the backup weapon of choice for law enforcement agencies across the country. Why would you choose a shotgun? One of the reasons is the spreading effect: it's believed that it's easier to defend yourself and hit your target at close range.

In the following pages, we offer a wide range of shotguns. Before you use your shotgun for self-defense, it's important to make sure you're comfortable with it. Consider going to your local firing range to make sure you can maneuver it and handle its recoil.

Here are our picks of the best shotguns to keep your family safe and sound from those foolish enough to invade your property.

Rustle Up A Shotgun

Defend Your Homestead With Sheer Power



STOEGER INDUSTRIES

PRODUCT: DOUBLE DEFENSE SHOTGUN

WEBSITE: www.StoegerIndustries.com

PRICE: \$479

SPECIFICATIONS:

Available Calibers: 12 gauge

Barrel Length: 18 inches

Overall Length: 36.5 inches

Weight Empty: 6.4 pounds

Capacity: 2 ¾-inch and 3-inch shells

DEFINING FEATURES:

Defending yourself in close quarters can be challenging, especially when carrying around an oversized shotgun. The Double Defense Shotgun is ideal for home security—it's made specifically for tight quarters and dealing with tense situations. This shotgun is fast and easy to deploy, thanks to its single-trigger design.



EMF COMPANY

PRODUCT: ESCORT SEMI-AUTO AND PUMP ACTION HOME DEFENSE SHOTGUNS

WEBSITE: www.EMF-Company.com

PRICE: \$530 (semi-auto), \$450 (pump)

SPECIFICATIONS:

Available Calibers: 12 gauge

Overall Length: 18 inches

Capacity: Six rounds

DEFINING FEATURES:

The Escort shotgun is a semi-automatic and pump action home defense weapon all rolled into one. The stock also has a built-in shell holder that carries two extra rounds. Pistol Grip has cushioned inserts. Sights have been designed for quick target acquisition, using a height adjustable fiber optic front sight in an elevated housing and a ghost ring rear sight that is a fully adjustable upper Picatinny Rail.



EMF COMPANY

PRODUCT: ESCORT MARINE GUARD AND AIM GUARD HOME DEFENSE PUMP SHOTGUNS

WEBSITE: www.EMF-Company.com

PRICE: \$450 (Marine Guard), \$350 (Aim Guard)

SPECIFICATIONS:

Available Calibers: 12 gauge

Overall Length: 18 inches

Capacity: Six rounds

DEFINING FEATURES:

The Escort Marine Guard and Aim Guard Home Defense Pump Shotgun is one versatile weapon. These tough polymer stocks are impervious to water. They have a short stroke action for quick repeat shots over a five-round tube magazine and have a large, easy-to-find slide release ahead of the trigger guard. The short barrel makes it ideal for tight spots and easy handling.

STOEGER INDUSTRIES

PRODUCT: P-350 DEFENSE PUMP SHOTGUN

WEBSITE:

www.StoegerIndustries.com

PRICE: \$349

SPECIFICATIONS:

Available Calibers: 12 gauge

Barrel Length: 18 inches

Overall Length: 40.25 inches

Weight Empty: 7.1 pounds

DEFINING FEATURES:

If you're looking for a reliable shotgun, look no further than the P-350 Defense Pump Shotgun. This is no ordinary shotgun—it's made specifically for close quarters, perfect for home defense. Choose from two rugged models with an optional pistol grip to improve accuracy. Two hands may be better than one, but try telling that to the P-350; you can operate the firearm easily with only one hand.



MOSSBERG & SONS

PRODUCT: FLEX 500 TACTICAL

WEBSITE: www.Mossberg.com

PRICE: \$877



SPECIFICATIONS:

Available Calibers: 12 gauge

Barrel Length: 18 inches

Overall Length: 42 inches

Weight Empty: 7 pounds

Capacity: Eight rounds

DEFINING FEATURES:

Mossberg combines performance with versatility in the form of the Flex 500 Tactical. This shotgun lets you load ammo while on the go, perfect for home defense when every second counts. Don't leave home without the Flex 500 Tactical.



MOSSBERG & SONS

PRODUCT: 590 TACTICAL LIGHT FOREND

WEBSITE: www.Mossberg.com

PRICE: \$698

SPECIFICATIONS:

Available Calibers: 12 gauge

Barrel Length: 20 inches

Overall Length: 41 inches

Weight Empty: 7.25 pounds

Capacity: Nine rounds

DEFINING FEATURES:

Mossberg has once again outdone itself with its latest shotgun offering. The 590 Tactical Light Forend is the premier weapon in self-defense. This 12-gauge firearm includes cylinder bore, bead sight, and convenient clean-out tube, so your weapon will always be in tiptop shape.

REMINGTON

PRODUCT: 870 Express

Seven Shot

WEBSITE:

www.Remington.com

PRICE: Starts at \$399

SPECIFICATIONS:

Available Calibers: 12 gauge

Barrel Length: 18 inches

Overall Length: 38.5 inches

Weight Empty: 7 pounds, 7 ounces

Capacity: Seven rounds

DEFINING FEATURES:

The shotgun features a fixed-cylinder choke barrel with a single-bead front sight. The magazine holds six 2 3/4-inch or 3-inch shells; one is in the chamber.



BENELLI

PRODUCT: M4 Tactical

WEBSITE: www.BenelliUSA.com

MSRP: \$1,899



SPECIFICATIONS:

Average Calibers: 12 gauge

Barrel Length: 18.5 inches

Overall Weight: 7 pounds, 8 ounces

Capacity: 5+1

DEFINING FEATURES:

This features the auto regulating gas-operated system, and it has a standard fully adjustable ghost-ring rear sight and fixed-blade front sight.





When the Devil's at the Door

7 Key Ways to Stop a Home Invasion

By Terrill Hoffman

Traumatized, violated, injured or dead are nothing more than simple words. Yet, these adjectives are often used to describe the victims of a burglary or home invasion.

These simple words have an even greater meaning when they are applied to you personally, and usually indicate a life-changing, or life-ending, event. However, the greatest deterrent to your safety is yourself. It's human nature to see reports on the evening news, or to read them in the newspaper and say, "It won't happen to me." For those with this attitude, I suggest that you look up and read the annual reports published by your local police departments, the FBI and the Department of Justice. When the number of burglaries per year in the United States number in the millions it's time for you to pay attention.

TERRILL HOFFMAN



Once you have a home defense firearm, you also have the responsibility to keep it safely stored. Hornady has just introduced a safe that protects the firearm but also gives you instant access.

Even I was caught off-guard when I looked up the data for my local county. Five years ago I moved out of a major city to a rural county with a total population of about 44,000 and only about 20,000 separate households. I reviewed the latest crime numbers from the past year and saw that we had 296 burglaries, or one per 67 households. These numbers come into perspective when you walk into an average restaurant and realize that the odds are someone sharing dinner with you that night is going to be, or has already been, a victim.

If you think my purpose is to

scare you into paying attention you're totally wrong. My purpose is the exact opposite since no one needs to go through life worrying about "what might happen." Those who realize what could happen and plan ahead are also those who can relax knowing that they are prepared. I'm not even going to discuss firearms, alarm systems, or structural changes to your home. These are subjects that require much more space and time than I have with this single article. What I am going to do is to point out half a dozen "must-have" items that you will need between

the time you hear the proverbial "breaking glass" and when the police arrive.

1. THE PLAN

The least expensive item is also the most important, a pre-arranged plan on how to react. Consider what may happen and what actions are needed to counter the situation. Those who live alone will have a totally different plan than those who live with a roommate or spouse. Families with children will need to react totally different.

When making your plan, every member of the household needs to take part and learn their individual obligations. Even a small child can learn to stay put and quiet until Mommy arrives. Being honest with children is a main aspect of a safe home. We don't hesitate to tell a child not to take candy from a stranger, and it will not traumatize them to learn how to react to someone breaking in. Every good parent has taught their children how to react should a fire occur and planning for a break-in can be part of the lesson.

To fully understand the values of planning ahead just imagine you and your spouse being awakened by breaking glass. You both dash to Timmy's bedroom and realize that neither one of you checked on your daughter Nancy. Meanwhile, no one has called 911 and your shotgun is sitting in the closet at the other end of the house. Nancy has heard the commotion, is scared, and

comes out of her room crying. You tell your wife to stay put and head to the living room to find Nancy. At that point you see a stranger positioned between you and your five-year-old daughter. This scenario does not end well, and could have been avoided by good planning. A two-dollar notepad and pencil is the only cost other than some of your time.

2. CELL PHONE

The second item is probably sitting near you right now and will not need an additional expenditure on your part—a cell phone!

The only thing you need to do is to discipline yourself to keep it nearby and fully charged. This especially includes after you retire for the evening since most home invasions occur at night. Keep your cell phone handy and at night right beside your bed. Charging times should be in the middle of the day. It takes very little effort for a criminal to defeat a land-line and your cell phone becomes your only contact to the outside world and help.

As soon as you hear trouble, call for help. The faster you make that call the faster help will arrive. Again, plan ahead if there's more than one person in the home and assign the duty to call 911 to an adult. Think about what you need to say to the operator now and put it in your plan. Tell them your name and address and a quick summary of the problem. If you're armed, don't forget to let the police know. Once contact is made with the police do not hang up,

but at the same time do not allow the phone to totally consume your attention.

3. THE SAFE

We're reaching a point where it's time to spend a little money. I'm a strong proponent of having a home-defense firearm, and being well trained in its use. In fact, I keep a few that are 100 percent intended for home protection. Each stays in a particular spot and is never moved for any reason other than practice and cleaning. The object of this procedure is to make sure I have access to them when needed, but I also have the obligation to make sure I, or my wife, are the only ones with access. This is important now but was even more important when my children were still young enough to be at home.

Barska is one company that has a full array of safes sized to fit any need. While most of my firearms are locked in a full-size safe, having a single handgun in a small safe in the bedroom has always been a good practice. Barska has several sizes and work with either a key, a keypad, or even opened when your fingerprints are pressed on a pad. Firearm retrieval is quick, yet they are totally protected and secure. While I have not tested one yet, Hornady has also entered this market with a new handgun safe called the RAPiD Safe. This safe can be opened with an RFID bracelet, card, key fob, or with a manually entered personal code. It's also accessible with a

conventional key lock. As with holstered firearms, and your personal home defense plan, you should spend time practicing retrieving your weapon. The Barska and Hornady safes are in the \$150-\$200 dollar range and are worth every penny.

4. LIGHT

There's a reason things go bump in the night. Darkness has been man's weakness since the beginning of time, and even everyday sounds become mysterious in the dark. The majority of robberies take place during these hours of darkness, but with good planning that's to the homeowner's advantage.

Anyone who's lived in a house for any period naturally learns how to navigate around walls or furniture in almost total darkness. Unless the robber is a very close friend or family member (yes, this can be the case), he does not have this advantage. During a robbery you not only want to be able to have light, but even more important you want to control the light. Once you start flipping on the house lights (which the robber may have disabled) you're putting the criminal at the same advantage as yourself.

By having a handheld flashlight you can direct the light where you want it. Flashlights have come a long way since the days of the two "D" cell units that always failed to work when needed. Modern LED lights are more powerful than you can

imagine and every family should have several. Keep one light at your bedside 24/7. This flashlight should never be moved and every member of the household should understand this simple rule. Also make sure you don't make the common mistake of getting a light that's too bright. A good flashlight of 100 to 200 lumens is more than enough to temporarily blind an attacker but with anything more powerful in close quarters and you run the risk of blinding yourself with the reflection off the walls of the house. I found a couple of lights manufactured by FoxFury that have served me very well for the past three years. Their Rook is ideal as a bedside light with 220 lumens and the Rook Checkmate with 600 lumens comes in handy searching the darkness around the

yard. Several other companies produce similar lights and good quality products are again available in the \$100-\$200 range.

A SPEEDING BULLET

5. One item that most of us have seen on television but have not considered for ourselves is the bulletproof vest.

Think about it, there's a reason why law enforcement officers wear them. Thankfully, U.S. Palm has introduced a model tailored for the average homeowner. The Defender comes equipped with a front ballistic panel for \$199 or with front and rear panels for \$299. Both soft armor panels offer a Threat Level Protection IIIA, which will stop just about any handgun round. The 500d Cordura Nylon vest (panel holder) can be ordered with pouches for a handgun and spare magazine, AR or AK

magazine pouches or simply with MOLLE straps. Once adjusted for an individual user the vest can be donned in mere seconds. You could keep a flashlight, handgun, cell phone and spare magazines all in one place for instant protection.

Keep one fact in mind when considering a bulletproof vest. If you get hit in the vest you're going to feel it and it will hurt, but that's a far cry from taking a round in the chest. If you have wondered if these vest really work put your mind to rest. I was able to test one of the panels against everything from a small .380 ACP up to a .357 Magnum. The rounds created small holes in the outer shell but totally failed to enter the soft ballistic panels. Your living room couch may or may not stop a bullet, but there's no doubt that the Defender will do the job.



FoxFury offers several models of high-powered LED Flashlights. After three years, I have complete faith in their quality. Match their power rating to your need and remember, brighter may not always be better.



▲ The most serious commitment you can make to your safety is adding a canine member to the family. Even at only 65 lbs. my Australian Shepherd mix, "Aussie," would deter most criminals. Mess with her "pack," and she instantly loses that sweet look.

6. AIR HORN

A criminal gains entry into your home thinking he knows what will happen. He has thought about and planned the events in his mind. It's your job to make sure he's wrong.

He may expect you to yell and scream, but I doubt he expects to be hit with a 120-decibel air horn. An inexpensive unit with a replaceable air canister may be just enough to convince him that you're ready and maybe he should leave to find another victim. As with the overpowering flashlight, the purpose is to disorient the criminal long enough for you to gain the upper hand. Not only will an air horn confuse the criminal but it will also alert everyone else in the house that there's a major problem.

There are one or two things

you should consider before waking the dead with an ear-piercing sound. First, as soon as you hit the button the bad guys knows where you are. If the sound does not deter him you need to be prepared to stop him with force. Second,

you do not want to be in sight of him when you let loose with an air horn. You will need time to have both hands free (or wrapped around a firearm) should the assault continue. Air horns can be found rather inexpensively at most stores that carry sporting goods. As with your flashlight, you will want to keep the horn in easy reach.

7. A DOG

My last suggestion is also the most expensive. Add another family member to your household by getting a dog. You may even get one free, but the upkeep over the lifespan of the dog can be substantial.

However, most criminals will admit that the one thing they don't want to face is a protective canine. A good dog doesn't need to be a trained attack dog (but it does help), nor does it need to be huge. It just needs to be part of the family. As such it will have a natural urge to protect the other members of its adopted pack. Dogs are also one of the

best alarm systems you can buy. Just make sure you're willing to make the commitment before you add to your family.

These items may not guarantee your safety, but each one will make you better prepared should someone consider making you a victim. Start by devising your own defensive home plan and add the other items as you can. Remember, the worst can happen and the last thing you want is to be a statistic. **HD**

Terrill Hoffman, a regular contributor to Engaged Media, has been writing about firearms for more than 25 years.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

U.S. PALM
23025 N. 15th Ave. Suite 103
Phoenix, AZ 85027
602-281-2940
www.USBalm.com

FoxFury Lighting Solutions
3528 Seagate Way, Ste 100
Oceanside, CA 92056
760-945-4231
www.FoxFury.com

Hornady Manufacturing Company
3625 West Old Potash Hwy
Grand Island, NE 68803
800-338-3220
www.Hornady.com

Barska
855 Towne Center Drive
Pomona, CA 91767
909-445-8168
www.Barska.com



Practical and Tactical

Vests and Gear
That Get the Job Done

By Home Defender Staff

You know the term, “dress for success.” How about, “dress for... a possible self-defense scenario?” Doesn’t have quite the same ring to it, we’ll grant you that, but it does make a point.

Why not dress for success in a different kind of arena—the one where your life may depend on it? From vests to belts to tactical shorts and more, we’ve gathered some top examples of apparel that satisfy both the eye and the wallet—whether you’re in the home or out and about—and hopefully will help keep you out of harm’s way.



BULLET PROOF ME BODY ARMOR

MODEL: Interceptor OTV (Outer Tactical Vest)

MSRP: Starts at \$710

WEBSITE: BulletProofMe.com

DESCRIPTION

This Outer Tactical Vest features front-opening convenience. Add optional rifle plates to achieve Level III, mil-spec SAPI, or Level IV rifle protection on the Chest and Back (Rifle Plates sold separately).

MOLLE web strips cover the front, plus the kidney areas on the back (MOLLE web strips compatible with all pockets from the MOLLE and RACK Systems, plus the SPEARS/BALCS Systems).

This superior vest includes torso coverage and rifle plate pockets, plus detachable collars and over-the-shoulder protection

(shoulder yoke), with detachable front throat protector and a detachable groin protector.

It's easily customizable—add or remove the front throat protector, the collar/over-the-shoulder protection or the groin protector components—as desired. Level III-A standard (for police departments that must adhere to NIJ standards). Level III-A is tested to stop .44 Magnum.

QUICK SPECS

- Weight: Size Large: 11.7 pounds
- Aramid Kevlar/Twaron
- 8.6 mm thick
- Camouflage Colors: Multicam, Woodland, Digital Woodland, Three-Color Desert, Digital Desert, Advanced Combat Uniform Digital
- Solid Colors: Black, Navy Blue, Olive Drab, Dark Tan, Light Tan, Safety Yellow



GALCO GUN LEATHER

MODEL: 1880s Cartridge Belt

MSRP: \$129.95

WEBSITE: GalcoGunLeather.com

DESCRIPTION

Feeling a little Western-y? The 1880s Cartridge Belt is the rig for the single-action shooter on the budget of the working cowboy.

It's reminiscent of the rigs worn in American Westerns in the 1950s and 60s.

The 3-inch wide belt is made of premium saddle leather rough side out, with a nickel-plated buckle and .38/.357 caliber cartridge loops centered on the belt for right or left hand used.

Available in tan, or tan with Havana cartridge loops. The holster is not included, but can be purchased separately in Galco's Western Holster section.

QUICK SPECS

Premium Center Cut Steerhide
3 inches wide
Nickel-plated brass buckle
Waist Sizes: 34-44 inches
Holster(s) sold separately



NUMA TACTICAL

Model: Chisel Frame

MSRP: \$79.99

Website: NumaTactical.com

DESCRIPTION

These are trim and light glasses that fit flush to the face. They feature a comfortable nose bridge and slight wrap-around contour that does not pinch or cut into your temples.

The interchangeable lenses—which are available in madarose, smoke and yellow—are scratch-resistant and shatter-proof, as they exceed ANSI Z87.1 safety standards.

They also block 100% of UV A-B-C rays. They offer good protection with interchangeable lenses for different lighting, and are ideal for the shooting range.

QUICK SPECS

- 100% UV protection
- Weigh 21 grams
- Anti-scratch hard coat on lenses



CONDOR

MODEL: Condor Elite Tactical Vest

MSRP: \$62.95

WEBSITE: TacticalGear.com

DESCRIPTION

When it comes to combat-ready equipment, Condor has more than 20 years of experience in the ever-evolving tactical and outdoor industry. The Condor Elite Tactical Vest offers complete, battle-ready construction that provides durability and comfort with premium material and workmanship for intense use and protection.

It's built to be sturdy and customizable both in fit and use. Its features include easily accessible pouches: six magazine pouches and two small utility pouches. Plus a heavy-duty cartridge belt designed to be a sturdy foundation for holsters, individual drawstrings attached at the back of the vest to allow adjustable tension at the chest, waist and hips for a customized fit.

Add two zippered document pockets at the left and right interior, six rows of MOLLE webbing on the back, double-ply mesh in the back that can accommodate a hydration bladder, two metal D-rigs at the shoulders, zippered front reinforced with two plastic buckles, a carrying handle for easy transport, hook-and-loop areas on large pouches for patches or nametapes and you're ready for action.

QUICK SPECS

- Weight: 2.5 pounds
- Size: One size fits most
- Length can be adjusted at the shoulders with long hook-and-loop strips
- Cartridge belt included
- Colors: Black, OD Green, Tan

5.11 TACTICAL

MODEL: TacLite Pro Shorts

MSRP: \$47.99

WEBSITE: 511Tactical.com

DESCRIPTION

5.11 manufactures tactical gear full of functional innovation while delivering exceptional value to the customer. This is the reason federal, state and local law enforcement officers trust in 5.11 Tactical to serve their gear needs for more than 30 years. All 5.11 military apparel is made to government specifications with the best manufacturing processes.

These shorts feature a lighter weight, cooler, faster drying material. It's stain and oil resistant. Wide snap, locking zipper, action waistband, extra wide belt loops, D-ring, utility strap and extra pockets will make sure all your supplies are handy while you're on the run.

QUICK SPECS

- 6-ounce 35/65 Cotton/Poly blend
- Rip-stop cloth
- Teflon coated
- Diamond gusset





SPYDERCO

PRODUCT: Pacific Salt Black Blade

MSRP: \$139.95

WEBSITE: Spyderco.com

DESCRIPTION

Made with H-steel, this blade will not rust, adding reliable proficiency when selecting a tactical knife. The Pacific Salt is the answer for those who need a full-size knife but can't carry a blade openly.

The slim design enhances its concealed carry options, yet the trademark Spyderco "hole" allows this blade to be instantly brought into action. The time-proven lock-back design assures the blade will stay locked open until the user wants to close it.

QUICK SPECS

- Overall Length: 8.6875 inches
- Length Closed: 4.875 inches
- Blade Thickness: .125 inch
- Blade Length: 3.812 inches
- Weight: 3 ounces

GUN TOTE'N MAMAS

MODEL: Wristlet

MSRP: \$35

WEBSITE: GunToteNMamas.com

DESCRIPTION

Concealed carry poses a problem for the fashionable woman in today's society. Not any more, thanks to Gun Tote'n Mamas. For times when a handbag is too much to carry, this embossed brushed leather Wristlet is just the ticket.

With leopard spot design and embossing that creates a two-tone effect, you'll be quite stylish—and ready to draw if the need arises. It can also hold your keys and iPhone. It features two extra inside zippered pockets and special padding to prevent gun imprinting, with an outside zippered pocket as well.

QUICK SPECS

- Wrist strap with clip
 - Leather removable tassel bling
 - Overall Bag Size: 9 inches long, 5¾ inches tall, ¾ inch deep
 - Gun Footprint: 7 inches long by 4½ inches tall
- For small gun sizes like P380



NORTH FACE

MODEL: Reversible Kingston Jacket

MSRP: \$149

WEBSITE: TacticalDistributors.com

DESCRIPTION

It's okay to be two-faced in the reversible Duck Camo/Black North Face Kingston Jacket. One side has the Tigers Eye Tan Duckmo print, the other is solid black, making it versatile for any occasion.

Completely reversible. Envelope kangaroo outer pockets with welted inner pockets. Reversible eyelet/drawcord system. Quilted through sleeves. One minute you're blending into the foliage, the next you've disappeared into the night. Wear it on the cold evenings when you're carrying.

QUICK SPECS

- 348g
- 100 percent polyester
- Insulation: 140g Heatseeker
- Sizes: M—XX LG
- Imported



BULLET PROOF ME BODY ARMOR

MODEL: ProMAX Tactical Vest with Rifle Plates Carrier

MSRP: \$160

WEBSITE: BulletProofMe.com

DESCRIPTION

Who doesn't need Tactical Body Armor in this day and age? You'll feel protected with Bullet Proof Me's ProMAX Tactical Vest with rifle plates carrier. Side opening torso protection, rifle plate pockets, lots of MOLLE real estate, two-pull Velcro quick release on shoulder and side for customized fitting in an highly ergonomic Tactical vest.

It offers lots more Level III-A body coverage versus just a rifle plates carrier. Bullet Proof Me can custom fit you in 2-inch increments to your torso and 1-inch increments to your height; for shorter or taller folks, this is critical for optimum coverage and comfort.

This vest is very quick to drop in an emergency—just one Fastex buckle and two Velcro pulls. Add optional rifle plates to achieve Level III rifle protection and Level IV armor-piercing rifle protection on the chest and back (rifle plates sold separately).

QUICK SPECS

- Optional Polyester/Cotton carrier for more comfort wearing under clothes
- Tough 1,000 Denier Cordura nylon carrier
- Colors: Coyote, Black, Multicam
- All-coated for waterproofing
- Allows side rifle plate pouches to be added as well as front and back rifle plates



Real Real Real People, Situations, Answers

Do you ever wonder what's going on in the mind of the burglar who's robbing your house?

So do we.

That's why we talked to one and found out for ourselves. The answers might surprise you.

To get the complete picture, we talked to the flipside of that coin—the victim. Please don't make the same mistakes he did.

And finally we picked the brain of a doctor to help make your brain stronger and deal with the stress of coping with emergency situations.

In the following section, you will get real people, real situations, real answers.

So buckle up and enter **Burglary 360.**



THINKSTOCK

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Prime Target

An Ex-Burglar Provides Insight
Into His Operation... From Picking
a House To Method of Entry

By Kerry Michael Li

I met “Raul” at a busy Westside restaurant in Los Angeles.

It was a sunny afternoon, and we were surrounded by suits and techies in this hip, bustling eatery. You would never know from looking at us that I was engaged in a conversation with a lifelong thief who breaks into homes for a living... and he’s never been caught.

Raul, an ex-burglar, said he used to make as much as \$3,000 from the sale of stolen goods.

Thieves buy information from people who have worked in your home.



Raul agreed to meet me with me after I sent out feelers to people I know who “know people.” Several of the burglars didn’t want to meet face to face or have a phone conversation for fear of being traced and subsequently busted. I made it clear they were only to be used as protected sources and their identity would not be compromised. Nobody wanted to do it.

EXCEPT ONE

Raul is a handsome, affable male in his 20s, born in the ol’ US of A. He’s stocky, casually dressed with groomed facial hair and is very vocal about his upbringing in this country as the poor son of legal immigrant parents who worked full time in rural Northern California. He’s an instantly likable guy who looks

you in the eye when he talks and is quick to laugh. He just so happens to be a thief—or, as he puts it—a former thief who has since changed his ways (or so he says).

FOLLOWING IS HIS STORY

Home Defender: *When was the first time you stole something?*

Raul: I was in kindergarten, and I stole a book. I wanted this “Where’s Waldo?” book. My parents didn’t buy it for me, and I didn’t understand why. So, when I was in the store, I put it under my shirt. I had the urge to have it in my hands, enjoy it and look for Waldo on every page. I don’t remember feeling anything when I took it, but I do remember having that book in my hands and being very happy.

DON'T BE A VICTIM A THIEF'S ADVICE TO YOU

Raul has suggestions for you on how not to be a victim of a home burglary: Get insurance for all your belongings, even if you live in an apartment. Don’t give out information to service personnel who do work in your home. Make it appear to them as if somebody’s always at home during the day. Get a good alarm and advertise it on your property. Find the weak spots in your home that are easy to enter and reinforce them with lights and sensors. Watch for people who are doing surveillance in your neighborhood that look out of place.



“It’s like the lottery. Sometimes you make a lot of money, especially if there’s jewelry and watches. A good haul is around \$3,000.”

HD: *How did it escalate from there?*

RAUL: At first, it was for stuff I wanted. I moved on to little toy cars and Hot Wheels, but I did not take them from stores, because I knew there were cameras, and my parents said, “If you steal, they’re going to see you.” They were telling me that to teach me right from wrong. Instead, I started taking the cars from my cousins’ houses. They had so many toys they didn’t count them. They didn’t know.

HD: *What happened after that?*

RAUL: As you grow up, you hang around friends who are poor like you, and you start to do bad things with them. For example, in elementary school we stole food. Growing up poor, I had these

emotions... I noticed that this world is unfair to people like me because when you have money you can do whatever you want and get away with it.

HD: *What was your attitude about the people you were stealing from?*

RAUL: I would never think of anybody as weak or as a victim. It’s just survival of the fittest. I would not put any emotions to anything I did, because if I did, I would fail. You have the pizza. I’m hungry. I want the pizza. As long as no one caught us, we were going to continue stealing pizza as a group. Especially when you’re a kid, you don’t think about the victim.

HD: *It’s seductive. What happened after the Pizza Gang?*

RAUL: We moved on to buying bigger things with the money we made from what we stole: soccer balls, marbles, yo-yos, things kids wanted in the early 1990s. We did that until I got caught in

the fifth grade. I was feeling I was a badass, a big-timer.

I got home, and I saw my neighbor’s orange tree. I jumped the fence, got two grocery bags full of oranges. My dad got home after a long day at work and saw me on the front porch eating oranges. He asked me where I got them. I didn’t give him an answer. Then a couple of days later our neighbor was all pissed, saying, “Somebody stole all my oranges!” So my dad kicked the sh** out of me and told me, “Whenever you want something, you’ve got to go out there and work for it.” He made me apologize to the neighbor, and he made me clean his house for weeks. He embarrassed me. Plus he told everyone I was a thief. It was a big lesson for me.

HD: *What did you learn?*

RAUL: Don’t get caught.

HD: *Then what happened?*

RAUL: You become a teenager in a very different, completely different society. Everything is materialistic. Everything is about being cool, fitting in... and the lack of income that my parents had? That helped me fit into this new culture.

They didn’t understand. They were looking at it from the outside. They weren’t in it. I was in it. Buying me K-Mart jeans was not the same as buying me Levi’s jeans. They didn’t understand the difference. I’m the first



Raul and his boys would just keep looking for a house without an alarm.



A window was usually the method of entry.

generation in this country. I didn't have an older brother to look up to or ask advice. I was asking advice from the wrong people. I'm 13, I cannot work, except for during the summers picking raspberries. And that doesn't give me enough for the whole year. So what do I do? So we started going to into people's houses to get as much as we could to pay for what we needed, what we wanted.

HD: *How did you pick houses?*

RAUL: First, you have to go to the fancier parts of town, the higher end. Nice properties. We didn't even think about security. You just wear a ski mask or go in the dark. You watch a house for two to three days, seeing the schedule.

I had a buddy of mine who would go and knock on doors, asking if they needed services. He got the idea from his cousin who was doing it in bigger cities. He would knock on doors and offer a free vacuuming and carpet cleaning. He would have a questionnaire for the owners,

and they would give them all the answers. It was designed to be about carpets in your house, but we were really asking questions about robbing them... like where are the high-traffic areas, when is that area the least used, when is the best time to clean when nobody is there. Stuff like that. He would give them pointers that actually worked on how to care for their floors, so they never suspected a thing.

We were successful with about three out of 10 houses we visited like that. The trick is not to rob the house for a few weeks or a month so they never thought it was you. You have to be patient when you rob houses. There are seasons to do it, too, like the Holiday season or summer vacations. We were very busy.

HD: *How did you physically break into the house?*

RAUL: We had an individual in our group who had a [satellite provider] van. Nobody says anything or notices a service van parked out front. They don't pay attention. We could just back it

right up to the house. Or a moving truck. We used those, too. That's how my place was robbed, with a hauling truck.

HD: *Wait, you were robbed?*

RAUL: My neighbor saw that they were taking a lot of stuff out of my house. He never paid attention because of the truck.

HD: *So the robber got robbed. How did you feel?*

RAUL: Well... it did give me a smile, because I thought now it's my turn, you know? But I was secure because I had house insurance. I covered my a**. They got my microwave, my TVs, my PlayStation, my washer and dryer, but I had receipts and insurance so I got all new appliances.

HD: *So how did you get into the houses?*

RAUL: Usually through a window. When you do it, you use a spark plug. You know the white porcelain on a spark plug? You break it off, throw it at a window as hard as you can and it absorbs all the sound. You put a towel on the ground to catch the glass, and that makes it quieter, too.

You never enter a house you have not checked out, and you must respect the elderly; you never break into old people's homes.

HD: *So you guys had a Code of Conduct?*

RAUL: Exactly... and no weapons of any kind. Plus, we would not hit houses in rural areas like ranches, because they all have guns and they can shoot us once we're on their property. They have animals, too.

HD: *How do you know the house is empty?*

RAUL: You knock on the door. If they answer, you run. If no one answers, that's the green light to go in. Then we go through the wardrobes, the closets, desks—everything. Good places to look are under furniture and mattresses. If there's a safe, usually in a garage, we load it up on a dolly and roll it into the truck and open it later with welding equipment and electric saws. My favorites are the small safes and lockboxes. We just take the whole thing.

HD: *What about alarms?*

RAUL: Fortunately, I've never had to deal with that. Also, it's all about teamwork. I could get my [satellite provider] friend to tell me about this house or that house. It helps to have an inside guy. He gets paid to provide us with information. Then we buy the information from him, and let me tell you something: Everybody has a price—everybody.

HD: *What do you do with the goods once you've stolen them?*

RAUL: It's all about having a

FBI STATS VIOLENT CRIME IN THE U.S.

- There's a violent crime every 25.3 seconds.
- A property crime occurs every 3.5 seconds.
- 5,479 burglaries every day.
- 73.9% of burglaries are on residential properties.
- More than \$5,000,000,000 in stolen property every year.
- 60.5% of burglaries are forcible entry.



pipeline. We're after jewelry and electronics. We keep all the cash. It's about whatever we can take and make a quick sale. The team consists of the inside person, the dirty workers or "cleaners," the people who actually do the job. The "fence" sells all of it.

HD: *Do you get one lump sum for the whole job?*

RAUL: We haggle over everything. He's like, "I'll give you 10 bucks for this and 20 bucks for this." Then he sells it to people for a profit. It's like the lottery. Sometimes you make a lot of money, especially if there's jewelry and watches. A good haul is around \$3,000.

HD: *What goes through your mind when you're burglarizing somebody?*

RAUL: It's a business. I started

because I wanted stuff. Then, at a certain age, you want the money. I grew up thinking, "Why me? Why am I poor?" It became a business, a challenge, to survive. You play hide-and-go-seek. You go in there and if you do get caught, you're done.

HD: *Why not revert back to those ways? What stops you now?*

RAUL: My kids. Once I became a father, I wanted to make sure I set a better example for them. I didn't want to have kids and be in prison. I want to be a role model for them. I'm struggling. I have to keep pushing. I know that if I keep walking through hell, I'm gonna make it, I'm gonna succeed, I'm gonna be perfect. **HD**

Kerry Michael Li lives and writes in Los Angeles.





THINKSTOCK

The American Nightmare

By Aileen Natalia

Lessons to Be Learned Before, During and After a Burglary

John W. of Southern California picked the house he bought with his wife, Jeanette, because it was next door to her childhood home. It was familiar, it was safe, and it had great memories. But that was about to change.

Purchased from Jeanette's uncle for \$685,000 in 2007, the modest 1,300-square-foot, one-story home with two bedrooms, a den and a living room had a nice backyard, a porch, a big gated driveway that led to the garage in a quiet neighborhood with limited traffic. It was the American Dream.

But this dream residence shared a block with two privately run recovery homes ("halfway houses") as neighbors on either side, down the block.

Isn't that a red flag?



You need to make preparations for a break-in today!

"It wasn't, because of the fact that we talked to my wife's uncle and to the neighbors before buying the house, and there had never been any issues," said John. "Actually, when my wife was a small child living next door, those recovery homes were there. She knew about them. There never were any problems."

And serving as a buffer between John's new home and the halfway houses? A pastor and his family to the left and a single mother and her son to the right. Sounds pretty cozy. And it was. For the most part, everybody knew each other and their neighbor's house.

"It's the perfectly manicured lawn with the perfectly manicured bushes—90 percent of the homes in our neighborhood are

like that," he said. "It's a nice neighborhood, an upper middle-class locale. But we are a few blocks away from a 'dividing line' between us and a not-so-good neighborhood, where things change dramatically."

That's a very common situation in constantly growing, densely populated urban areas. Along with that overcrowding comes the inevitable... unfortunately.

MOVING IN

John and Jeanette kept the security system that was already in her uncle's home when they bought it. The front and back of the house were well lit, with motion sensors at the end of the driveway by the garage and rear door to the house.

"Everything was status quo. We were happy with the set-up," John said.

The couple fell into a routine in their new home, each leaving separately in the morning to go to work and arriving home in the evenings at different times as well.

"We would only put on the alarm if we were going to be gone for extended periods of time, like to work. But not to go to the store or something like that," he notes. "The day that it happened, I got a call from my wife. I was at work. It was 1:30 in the afternoon."

THE BREAK-IN

Jeanette had gone home in the afternoon and noticed that the window in the back door to the

house had been broken. Doing the smart thing by not entering the home, she called John right away.

“The reason my wife went home in the first place was because she got the call from the alarm company,” John explains. “They call you and tell you that this sector of your house has been disturbed, that the sensor in a certain part of your house went off.”

The alarm company called Jeanette to see if she was home (she wasn’t), to see if she set off the alarm (she hadn’t) and to

provide the password to turn off the alarm (she did). She waited to call her husband until she made the 15-minute trip over to the house in broad daylight to check things out and discover what had happened.

Jeanette found out that the police had already been at the house before she had arrived, and they had closed the gate to their driveway, which had been opened by the thieves. The police had then taken a quick drive around the neighborhood, but unfortunately didn’t see or catch anybody.

MEET AND GREET COULD SAVE YOU

The one thing John W. said he learned from the aftermath of the break-in to his home was his appreciation for getting to know his neighbors better after it happened.

He just wishes he did it earlier.

Don’t make the same mistake. Get to know your neighbors now before you regret not doing it. It’s never too late to meet your neighbors.



Why wait to upgrade your alarm system? Do it now.



"We discovered that the burglars had opened the gate in the middle of the day, went to the back of the house, broke the rear window, started to enter the home and the motion inside the window—the curtains moving—had set off the alarm. So the alarm didn't go off until they were actually entering the house," said John.

"When I got there, my wife was frantic, which is understandable," John said. "One of our neighbors said they saw three young individuals running down our driveway after the alarm went off."

As troubling as it was, it could have been worse. They could have lost a lot of valuable electronics gear or Jeanette could have encountered the burglars as they were leaving.

THE AFTERMATH

Afterward, they felt a sense of violation.

"Even though there was relief they didn't get all the way in the

house," John said, "her mind went straight to, 'I want bars on that back window, I want new deadbolts.'"

The next day the couple called the alarm company and updated and upgraded everything.

"Now we have more motion sensors that extend to the detected areas, even through the kitchen," said John. "And the add-on package has cameras set up in there. I can even use an app on

my smartphone or tablet to see inside my house right now."

The system is even set up to text John in the case of a disturbance and the camera will then start recording on his computer's hard drive. The extras cost the couple about \$50 a month more.

"I've never dealt with a break-in. I've never been robbed. I wasn't prepared. It's not something I think about."

What has changed?

"I'm more attentive coming home now. I look for weak points—shadows in the driveway, behind a shrub. I'm more aware of ways that I'm vulnerable. I have a new car that can turn on the lights inside the car before I get in. And now we're more steadfast about setting the alarm every time we leave—even if it's for 15 minutes going to the store. If we're not in the house, the alarm is on."

GUT REACTIONS

The emotional and psycho-

6 METHODS TO BREAK THE ICE WITH NEIGHBORS

1 Use a current event to break the ice, like "What about that storm last night? You guys okay?" or "Did you hear about the break-in in our neighborhood? Do you want to exchange numbers?"

2 Although a bit old fashioned, bringing a new neighbor some cookies can make them feel welcome and provide an opportunity to get to know one another.

3 Contact your local police for info on your Neighborhood Watch program.

4 Leave a key with trusted relatives or neighbors to use to get into your home when you're not around.

5 Follow simple guidelines to make sure your residence doesn't look empty during the holidays—neighbors can be your best allies at that time.

6 Remember, there's strength in numbers!

logical impact from the incident hit John hard, too.

"My reaction was the same as hers," he said. "I can see that bars on the back window will deter somebody from breaking in. I'm now more conscious of 'entry points,' places where you can break in. Then we discussed the extra cost of the added security. We spend that in one night going to the movies. I was okay with that. But where we we're different is in how we react to situations." **HD**

Aileen Natalia lives and writes in Los Angeles. She upgraded her home security after writing this article.

UPGRADE YOUR HOME ALARM SYSTEM DO IT BEFORE IT'S TOO LATE

Does your home alarm system include the following:

- Wireless cameras**
- Smoke, fire and carbon monoxide detectors**
- Wireless receivers**
- Glass break sensor**
- Wireless siren**
- Water level sensor**
- Remote control key fob**
- Cellular backup**
- Panic button**
- Freeze sensor**
- Driveway alarm**
- Cellular network connection**



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Never Say Die

4 Ways To Develop
Emotional Muscle So You
Can Handle Any Crisis

By Thomas J. Nardi, Ph.D.

How do you strengthen your body?
By exercise.

How can you strengthen your mind? The same way... you exercise.

Emotional muscle can be developed as surely as physical muscle. But to do so you need a plan of specific exercises. Here are some things you can do to develop your emotional muscles. They are designed to strengthen your ability to use your mind to your best advantage. If followed, they will fill you with the almost unlimited power of mental strength and will prepare you to better handle whatever crisis or unexpected adversity may arise.

TERRILL HOFFMAN



Don't be afraid of... your fear.

Just as physical strength can only be attained by consistent practice, so too emotional strength. Daily practice—if only for 10 or 15 minutes—is better than an hour of practice once a week. These exercises can be practiced throughout the day. Indeed, they can be done whenever you have a few free minutes.

Emotional muscle goes by many different names: mental strength, mental toughness, stoicism, intestinal fortitude, a "never say die" attitude... different terms for the same phenomenon. It's rugged determination in the face of adversity, the ability to persevere to a goal regardless of the obstacles.

1. FEEL THE FEAR

Some people erroneously believe that mental strength means being free of fear. Nothing could be further from the truth. The first step in becoming stronger emotionally is to accept fear. It's natural—and indeed healthy—to be afraid when in

dangerous or threatening situations.

Acknowledge your fear. Be mindful of it as you feel the changes it's producing in your body. Your heart rate has increased, you may feel your limbs growing cold, you may begin to tremble and sweat. You may even feel nauseous.

Everyone feels the same basic psychological impact of fear. The difference between those who have mental strength and those who lack it lies in how they react to these physical sensations.

Most people feel overwhelmed by the sensations. They tell themselves something like, "I'm scared, I'm afraid, I can't face what's happening, I can't do

this." They allow their perception of what's happening to them to defeat them.

By contrast, the mentally strong give themselves very different messages: they think differently. They remind themselves that what they're feeling is the body's way of preparing them for action. Sure, their heart is pumping harder, but it's doing so to ensure they have enough oxygen to give them energy.

They know their arms are feeling cold because the blood is withdrawing into their torso. This way if they're hit or cut, their arms will not bleed as much. The blood is going to the torso where it's needed.

The shaking and nausea are just more indications that their body is ready to spring into action. Adrenalin is being produced and is surging through their system. This release of adrenalin produces what's known as the Flight Fight Reaction, the body is preparing itself for optimal efficiency and action.

The decision to flee or fight is your choice—but either way, the sensation you're labeling as "fear" is just an indicator light telling you that you're ready to take decisive action. Knowing

GOOD WAITERS

Patience Really is a Virtue

Good waiters get rewarded... and not just in restaurants. You should also try "waiting." Practicing delayed gratification is the fifth way to build emotional muscle. In a hurry to grab a bite to eat? Wait 15 more minutes. The discipline of self-control will definitely help you to be stronger psychologically.

and really believing this will greatly increase your mental strength. Your fear, with all the physical sensations it produces, is your ally, not your adversary.

2. WHAT IF...

To become stronger emotionally you also need to be able to combat anxiety.

Anxiety can produce a constant sense of foreboding and dread. Sometimes we can identify exactly what we are anxiously dreading; other times it's less defined and more vague.

Develop your emotional muscles by learning to identify your self-talk. What messages are you giving yourself?

If you're feeling anxious, it's quite likely you're giving yourself a "What if..." message. You're probably asking yourself, "What if this happens?" or "What if that happens?"

Inevitably there are two parts to a "What if..." message. First, you're telling yourself something bad is going to happen. This may or may not be true. So, before your anxiety increases and turns to panic, ask yourself: "How likely is it that something bad will happen?" Are you unwittingly exaggerating the actual threat? Are you taking what's possible and reacting as if it's probable? Question yourself. You may, indeed, have nothing to fear.

The second part of a "What if..." message, after due consideration, may indeed be, "Yes! Something bad is going to happen!" What quickly follows,

although not always articulated, is the thought, "It will be 100 percent awful and catastrophic. I won't be able to handle it."

To become stronger emotionally, learn to challenge and dispute this "awfulizing" and "catastrophizing." Change your self-talk to "Yes, this is truly bad but it's only bad. It's not truly awful. It's not catastrophic. It will be rough, but I can and will handle it."

But you may be asking, "How do I know I can handle it?" The answer is simple: the reality is almost never as bad as we imagine. You're a lot stronger than you might think.

Everyday people are surprised at how well they handle crises that they never thought they could handle. You're more of a survivor than you might think.

Those who are mentally strong

WISDOM FROM THE 1800S

"If you can keep your head when all about you ...
If you can trust yourself when all men doubt you ..."
So begins the famous poem by Rudyard Kipling.
Written more than 100 years ago, the verses still speak to us today, as it captures the essence of mental toughness.
Search for the poem online. Print it out and post it where you can see it often.
It's the sixth way to develop mental strength, and this may inspire you.

never give into the belief that things are catastrophic. They remind themselves that no matter how bad a situation is, they will get through it. Once again, changing your thinking builds your emotional muscles. Exercise and strengthen your mind by



identifying and challenging your negative thoughts.

3. TALK TO YOURSELF Your emotions come from your thoughts, your self-talk, and the messages you give yourself. To change or strengthen your emotions you need to change or strengthen your self-talk.

How do you feel when you tell yourself, "This is horrible; I'll never succeed?"

How would you feel if you changed it to, "This is bad, but not horrible; I will succeed?"

Or, "There's too much work to do; I'll never finish" compared to "Slow and steady wins the race."

And speaking of races, imagine you're out for a jog. You come to a hill. Do you tell yourself, "Oh, no, a hill" or "Good, now I can really challenge myself and get stronger"?

Your thoughts will make a big difference in how you feel and what you do. As Henry Ford once observed: "If you think you can or if you think you can't, you're probably right."

You may not be able to control what happens to you, but you can control what you tell yourself about what happens.

Change your thinking, and you change your emotions.

4. STAY INSPIRED Another exercise to build emotional muscle requires reading.

Keep yourself inspired by reading about others who stayed

strong mentally while facing a crisis. After any crisis, whether a natural disaster such as a flood, snowstorm or hurricane, or perhaps a man-made eruption of violence such as a shooting, heroes emerge.

These heroes are ordinary people caught in extraordinary situations. They became heroes by staying calm. Read about them. Learn from them. They're no different than you. What they did, you can do. By reminding yourself of what other "average" people have done, you can cultivate a stronger mental outlook. They can inspire you to be psychologically strong when you may find yourself facing adversity.

If they could do it, so can you!

What if no heroes emerged? This gives you another exercise to strengthen your emotions.

Think about the situation. Visualize yourself in the crisis. Exercise your mind and emotions by thinking what you would have done in the situation.

For example, the news reports a home invasion, describing what the perpetrator did to gain access. Now, think of how they could have been stopped, of what you could have done to stop them. What preparation could you have made that would have prevented their entry? What could have been done differently when they entered? What would you have done differently?

Knowledge replaces fear. Know what could have been

MUSIC HATH CHARMS

Can listening to music strengthen your emotional muscles? Yes, it can, and it's the seventh way to build emotional muscle.

As British playwright William Congreve wrote in 1697, "Music hath charms to soothe the savage breast."

Music can calm you. It can help relax you so that you can control your emotions. On the flip side, music can also strengthen your resolve. Exercising is much easier while listening to music.

Think about how many boxers and MMA fighters enter the ring to the rousing motivating beat of their training music. It puts them in the proper psychological frame of mind to compete and win.

Let the right tunes help you succeed as well.

done and what can be done.

The more you know, the greater your mental strength.

IT'S UP TO YOU

You now have the blueprints to build your emotional muscles and mental strength. The next step is the most important of all. Now you need to take what you have learned and put it into action.

Remember, you're worth the effort! **HD**

Thomas J. Nardi, Ph.D. is the Director of the Counseling programs at Long Island University Hudson Graduate Centers in Orangeburg, New York, and West Point, New York. He's a licensed psychologist, certified in Critical Incident Stress Management and the creator of Eclectic Cognitive Behavior Therapy.

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COURTESY OF MANUFACTURERS

Perfect Visibility

Off-the-Chart Lumens and Airplane-Rugged Construction, These Lights Are Ideal for Personal Safety

By Home Defender Staff

Scrambling at the last second is something you don't want to do. So, what's on your home defense flashlight list?

You should have a reliable flashlight that provides a ton of lumens. Your light source should be rugged, waterproof and impact-proof, and affordable. After all, the safety of your family is paramount.

To ensure you're armed with bright light, we've selected some of the best flashlight options available. Some of these are new products, hot off the manufacturer's shelf.

Because well-prepared homeowners don't scramble.



XBT D3

COMPANY: 5.11 Tactical

MSRP: \$139.99

WEBSITE: www.511Tactical.com

DESCRIPTION

The XBT D3 provides durability, output and runtime, and that's just the start of an impressive lineup of features.

Its hard body features aerospace-grade aluminum, high-quality polycarbonate lens, regulated circuit and three Cree XMLB LEDs. The

lumens are off the charts, as it has 1,231 on high and 100 lumens on low.

For an added bonus, it features a crenellated bezel, an anti-roll rubber ring and water- and impact-resistant construction.

QUICK SPECS

- Two-hour runtime on high and 72 hours on low
- 188-meter beam distance on high
- 12.06 inches long
- 2.438-inch diameter head
- 1.75-inch diameter body
- Weight with batteries is 32 ounces



XBT A6

COMPANY: 5.11 Tactical

MSRP: \$94.99

WEBSITE: www.511Tactical.com

DESCRIPTION

Similar to the XBT D3, the A6 is also packed with features, including the aerospace-grade aluminum, the tough polycarbonate lens, a regulated circuit and the Cree XMLB LED, which scores on durability, output and runtime. In addition, it'll run you just a little bit less.

Even so, the XBT A6 casts 629 lumens on high and 111 lumens on low. Another way that it's different is that the XBT A6 can run at full power with just three batteries installed (but the runtime is reduced by about 50 percent).

QUICK SPECS

- 629-lumen output on high and 111 on low
- 10-hour runtime on high and 57.5 hours on low
- 328-meter beam distance
- 10.188 inches long, 2.188-inch diameter head, 1.44-inch diameter body
- Weight with batteries is 16 ounces



M600 FUSION

COMPANY: ExtremeBeam

MSRP: \$129.95

WEBSITE: www.ExtremeBeam.com

DESCRIPTION

Big things come in small packages.

The M600 features a Cree 600-lumen LED matched to a machined-aluminum reflector, and that equation means the Fusion generates what the manufacturer calls the "tightest beam angle in the industry." It throws a focused beam to nearly a mile with an operating range of 1,300 feet.

It's constructed from a double-sealed aircraft aluminum billet housing and it's waterproof to 30 feet.

QUICK SPECS

- Modes: High, medium, low, strobe, off
- Weight: 8.9 ounces with batteries
- Total Length: 6.38 inches
- Head Bezel Width: 1.75 inches
- Main Body Width: 1.125 inches
- Average runtime: Six hours (high), 12 hours (medium), 24 hours (low), 10 hours (strobe)



SX21-HO BLACKBIRD

COMPANY: ExtremeBeam

MSRP: \$59.95

WEBSITE: www.ExtremeBeam.com

DESCRIPTION

When it comes to home defense, the SX21-HO Blackbird flies high.

It's affordable, it has 220 lumens and the battery is long lasting. It also features the SuperLumen reflecting cone, and the single-mode LED projects

light to 274 meters. It also features an anti-recoil system, and the double O-ring seals for up to 30 feet of waterproof protection.

QUICK SPECS

- Weight (with battery) is 5 ounces
- Total Length: 5.42 inches
- Head Bezel Width: 1.36 inches
- Main Body Width: 1.02 inches
- Average runtime: Seven hours
- Average runtime: Seven hours
- Weapons mountable



2AA PROPOLYMER HAZ-LO

COMPANY: Streamlight

MSRP: Starts at \$13.95

WEBSITE: www.StreamLight.com

DESCRIPTION

The 2AA ProPolymer could be renamed the all-purpose light, as it's applicable for the home or law enforcement, fire and rescue and security.

The Pro, which has 65 lumens and a 96-meter beam distance, is durable, waterproof and

showcases a push-button tail switch for momentary on and off.

QUICK SPECS

- Runs 24 hours
- Powered by two "AA" Alkaline batteries
- The Smooth parabolic reflector produces a tight beam with optimum peripheral illumination
- Waterproof to 1 meter for 30 minutes
- 1 meter impact-resistance tested
- Total Length: 6.40 inches
- Total Weight: 3.6 ounces



PROTAC HL 3

COMPANY: Streamlight

MSRP: \$134.94, but it varies

WEBSITE: www.StreamLight.com

DESCRIPTION

In the ProTac series, the HL3 is the new kid on the block.

It has 1,100 lumens, the latest in power LED technology and three different user selectable programs. For good measure, it has a removable pocket clip and holster.

QUICK SPECS

- Three Programs: High/strobe/low; High only; Low/high
- 90-minute runtime on high
- 36-hour runtime on low with 35 lumens
- 90-minute runtime on strobe
- Durable anodized machined-aircraft aluminum construction
- Waterproof to 1 meter for 30 minutes
- 1-meter impact-resistance tested
- Total Length: 7.10 inches
- Total Weight: 9.3 ounces



E2L AA OUTDOORSMAN

COMPANY: Surefire

MSRP: \$250

WEBSITE: www.SureFire.com

DESCRIPTION

The SureFire E2L is your go-to flashlight for emergency, survival or everyday needs.

Two power settings activate with a simple click of the tail cap switch, producing instant low- (five lumens) to high-level (115 lumens) lighting. It features a Total Internal Reflection lens that creates a tight beam with extended reach while clearly illuminating your peripheral vision range. Its outer casing is constructed of a rust- and corrosion-resistant, lightweight aluminum, anodized with a Mil-Spec finish.

Multiple O-ring seals keep out damaging moisture, dust and debris.

QUICK SPECS

- 115 lumens
- Runtime: 8.5 hours
- Length: 6.8 inches
- Bezel Diameter: 1.125 inches
- Weight with Batteries: 4.7 ounces





PELICAN 7000

COMPANY: Pelican

MSRP: \$79 but prices vary

WEBSITE: www.Pelican.com

DESCRIPTION

Turn darkness to light with the 7000, which produces 602 lumens of LED light. It has four light modes (high, medium, low and strobe) for close-quarter to long-distance viewing.

QUICK SPECS

- 90-minute runtime on high
- runtime of two hours, 15 minutes on medium
- 16-hour runtime on low
- Optional recharging kit
- Battery level indication
- Waterproof
- Aluminum body, polycarbonate resin
- Length: 5.31 inches
- Weight with Batteries: 5.6 ounces

POLYSTEEL 600

COMPANY: Coast

MSRP: \$39.99

WEBSITE: www.CoastPortland.com

DESCRIPTION

This may be a candidate for the ultimate flashlight.

It features a tough, stainless steel core that's wrapped in a grip-textured nylon polymer. Sporting 579 lumens, the Polysteel's beam distance is 856 feet. With a runtime of more than 13 hours on low and a lifetime warranty, the Polysteel 600 is a flashlight you need to seriously consider.

QUICK SPECS

- runtime of two hours and 15 minutes on high
- runtime of five hours and 30 minutes on medium
- Length in Flood Mode: 7.87 inches
- Length in Spot Mode: 8.12 inches
- Poly casing, stainless steel core
- Weight: 0.75 pounds
- Diameter: 1.87 inches
- Waterproof
- 3-meter drop tested





More lights equals
fewer opportunities
for criminals to hide.



THINKSTOCK

Hard Target

Home Defense Tips from
5 Top Law Enforcement
Experts

By Torrey Kim

How would you like a personal security guard for your home 24 hours per day? That would be great, of course, but it's obviously unrealistic. So do the next best thing.

We all can benefit from police officers' vast knowledge on how to keep our homes safe, so check out the advice from the following five law enforcement officers. Let them help you break down the truth about the best ways to protect your home and everything inside of it, especially your family.



1. FRANK DONCHEZ, CHIEF OF POLICE, OVERLAND PARK, KANSAS

One way to increase your home defense is to actually follow through on making it impenetrable by locking it up. Although this may seem straightforward to most homeowners, it seems to escape a growing number of people, says Chief Donchez.

“The number one mistake is leaving the garage door or front door open or unlocked,” he advises. “In over half of all residential burglaries, entry is made through an open or unlocked door.”

This advice makes sense. After

all, if you were a criminal and were walking up a residential street, would you target the house with the closed screen and storm door, or the house with the garage door, front door and side door all wide open?

Obviously, the criminal wants to take the easiest path possible, and you’ve helped him do that by providing an open invitation—and entryway—to your most valuable items.

Close and lock the door and you may have just prevented a criminal from selecting your home as his next free-for-all.

In addition, Donchez says, avoid luring criminals onto your

property, which can often take place right in your driveway.

“Criminals target open and unlocked vehicles parked in driveways and inside of open garages. Residents often leave valuable property in plain view inside of an unsecured vehicle.”

For instance, if you leave a GPS device or computer on the seat of your car, the criminal will simply open the door and run off with your belongings. Worse yet, they may not run anywhere—they may take the items in the car as just an appetizer, with the main course waiting in the house. If you have a computer charger in the car, that could whet the

burglar's appetite just enough to go searching for the actual computer, which will lead him right through your front door. Once he's inside, there's no telling how much of your stuff he can run off with.

Your key could be your number one defense against a burglary.

"A homeowner can reduce their chance of being a victim just by locking things up," Donchez says. "Landscaping and lighting can also be evaluated to reduce criminal opportunity along with just being a good neighbor and reporting suspicious activity. Our city offers free security surveys to residents where several methods of 'hardening the target' are discussed."

2. DANIEL HUDSON, PUBLIC INFORMATION OFFICER WITH THE NORFOLK, VIRGINIA POLICE DEPARTMENT

NEIGHBORHOOD WATCH

There's No "I" In "Team"

Public Information Officer Susan Danielson recommends starting a Neighborhood Watch program, but do you know what this entails?

Although you might see it as a vigilante group wandering the streets and taking the law into their own hands, that's absolutely not the case, the Greensboro PD says. Instead, Community Watch is a system where neighbors know one another and can therefore identify someone who doesn't live in the neighborhood and is acting suspiciously. If the neighbors see anything potentially illegal happening, they know to report it to their block captain and the local police department, which can take the matter from there.

Most police departments have a community relations department or public information officer who can help point you in the right direction on how to establish an effective Community Watch program.

Criminals love to hide, says Hudson, so if you're able to ensure that they don't have an opportunity to escape your watchful eye, you've already thwarted a percentage of potential crimes.

"Lighting is a big deterrent.

Wherever there's a dark place, criminals can hide. But if you have lighting around, people can see what's going on," he says. "The lighting is not necessarily for you in the home, it's also for the neighbors who hear a noise, or someone driving past who

The more eyes and ears that are watching the streets, the better.





3.

Home security cameras are good deterrents, law enforcement officials say.

sees someone around your property. You wouldn't want to waste any time fumbling for a light switch if you hear anything, so lighting is a huge asset."

You should not only light your front porch, but your entire property. Flood lamps placed on your house, solar path lights placed along your walkway and driveway and motion-detecting lights that are triggered when someone walks onto your property are just a few examples of ways you can light up your domain.

In addition, don't forget to keep lights in areas that you wouldn't think you'd ever need to see, such as the spot where you store your trashcans or rakes. In reality, those dark, forgotten areas are exactly the places that burglars would hide out and easily go unseen.

In addition, knowing how to audit your own property for

LOCAL OR MONITORED SYSTEM

Which One Is Better?

You've got locks on your solid metal doors and a state-of-the-art security system installed, but if you fail to use those things, they're worthless. Make sure you make good use of the resources you already have, says Daniel Hudson.

"When you leave the home, make sure you lock the deadbolt," he says. "The other lock, the dead latch, isn't enough by itself. Plus, make sure all your doors and windows are locked, and if you have an alarm system, make sure you turn it on. We'll often respond to a residential burglary when the victim didn't activate the alarm system because they were only leaving for a few minutes, but it only takes a few minutes for someone to get into a house and take their belongings."

If you're considering an alarm system for the first time, you should know the difference between local and monitored programs.

"Monitored means you pay for a central station to monitor it," Hudson says. "When someone sets it off, the alarm company gets a notification from the home, and the alarm company will contact the resident and if they can't get in touch, they contact the police department and we investigate. A local system, on the other hand, is a good avenue for people who don't want to pay for the service. It just isn't monitored, so if someone breaks in, the alarm system will go off and is audible and deters the person breaking in because they don't know whether it's monitored or not."

In addition, Hudson says, you can get a system that you self-monitor using an accompanying app on your smartphone. If you're away from home and see something suspicious show up via the phone app you can determine whether or not to call the police department.

vulnerabilities is extremely valuable.

“Our crime prevention unit can perform a Residential Security Survey for free to residents of our district where we talk to the resident, discuss their security habits and then after we talk to them we learn what they’re most scared of and we take them around and do an inspection of the doors, locks, windows and lighting to look for vulnerabilities that a suspect could take advantage of. We also offer ways to secure the home with lighting, doors, locks, sliding glass doors, the garage, etc. We also do surveys for businesses as well.”

If you’d like to determine your areas of vulnerability, contact your local police department to find out if they can perform such a survey in your area. If your law enforcement officers prefer to do the home audits for small groups, you can gather several neighbors who also want to benefit from such a presentation and

the officers can go over the specifics of home security with all of the neighbors at the same time. If you can’t get a home assessment performed, take it on with your neighbors. Ask one of them to hide on your property and see if you can find them—if not, you’ve just found an area of vulnerability that you can tackle.

3 ■ RODNEY A. BRIGHT, DEPUTY POLICE CHIEF, GERMANTOWN, TENNESSEE

If you’ve never met your neighbors, you could be making yourself vulnerable to a burglary. Although there may not initially seem to be a correlation between these two factors at face value, the reality is that your neighbors are essentially your backup force for home defense.

“Relationships with neighbors is a potential deterrent,” says Bright. “We’re always encouraging our citizens to help be the ‘eyes and ears’ of the department in their neighborhoods. We

NO ACCESS!

Harden Your Target

Chief Frank Donchez refers to “hardening the target” during residential security surveys... but what does that mean? Essentially, the “target” is your house, and “hardening” refers to making it more difficult for that target to be compromised.

Anything you do to secure your home makes it harder for the criminal to target you, so the more layers of protection you can add, the better you’ve done in terms of target hardening to convince a burglar that your house is the wrong target.

call them our force multiplier. Being aware of people, vehicles or situations that seem suspicious for the particular neighborhood may prompt them to call the police to investigate. Having this awareness helps them detect things that are not normal.”



Leaving your keys in your car is a bad idea!



Even if you don't see someone breaking into a home, you might see would-be burglars who are casing your neighborhood.

"Some criminals may survey an area before they decide to commit a crime," Bright says. "People should trust their instincts and call the police first when something or someone seems suspicious."

Some neighborhoods maintain email lists so that if someone sees suspicious activity, they can disseminate it through the group quickly and without leaving their

house. If your neighborhood doesn't have such a list, you should consider creating one and asking the neighbors to register so everyone is made aware of potential safety and security issues.

In addition, Bright says, you could be leaving the keys to your home in plain sight.

"Don't leave garage door openers visible," he says. They can provide a simple way for burglars to easily access your home and clean it out.

Essentially, Bright says, you

should approach your home always being on the lookout for unusual activity.

"Just as shoppers are told to always be aware of their surroundings when shopping, so, too, should the homeowner be aware as they come and go from home as well as while at home," he says. "Take advantage of technology such as cameras, home alarm systems, etc."

4. KEITH MCCULLOCH, CRIME PREVENTION OFFICER, ASHEVILLE, NORTH CAROLINA

Counting on robbers to simply choose another house? You could be right—but don't count on it.

"The number one mistake most homeowners make is that they think it won't happen to them," McCulloch says. "Most homeowners procrastinate when it comes to crime prevention at home. During 2013, there was a burglary every 16.4 seconds in the U.S. with a total of 1,928,465 burglaries committed. Most burglaries are crimes of opportunity and the best way to prevent burglaries is to target harden your home in order to be less attractive to burglars."

You should operate as if a robbery not only could happen to you, but that you will definitely be the intended target of a burglar eventually. If you assume it will happen to you, you're more likely to appropriately secure your home, remember to lock your doors, improve your lighting and otherwise reduce the opportunity for a criminal to penetrate your house. Besides, we know that it could happen to you.

In addition, McCulloch recommends a four-legged security system to help deter criminals.

"Post-arrest interviews with burglars have indicated most do not like to break into homes that have dogs due to the fact that they are noisy, alert neighbors and also the fear that the dogs may attack," he says.

The size of the dog shouldn't matter, because the barking alone is typically enough to deter a thief. Anything that calls attention to your house is bad for a burglar. Excessive barking could draw the eyes of a neighbor, which the thief doesn't want. As long as your dog makes noise when someone is at the door, you're giving your home an extra layer of security.

In the same vein, security alarms are a very good deterrent when properly used, McCulloch adds.

"Alarms are designed to deter criminals by actively posting with signs on doors, windows, and yards that the property is alarmed and also by alerting the police when there is a break-in."

However, you should not rely solely on your home security system as your only line of defense.

"Homeowners are sometimes lulled into a false sense of security by not locking their doors or windows because they feel safe with the alarm," he adds. "Criminals break in because the owners do not have the barriers in place that would deter a thief from committing the burglary."

Make sure you lock all of your

doors. Rotting and decay around door frames make it very easy for a burglar to break away at the door and easily enter your structure, so check the security of all of your doors (both inside and out) every few months. For example, if you have a double-door leading to your basement that opens from the outside, you probably have a chain around it to keep it secure. A burglar can cut the chain in a few seconds and get in.

5. SUSAN C. DANIELSEN, PUBLIC INFORMATION OFFICER, GREENSBORO, NORTH CAROLINA POLICE DEPARTMENT

If you want to thwart burglars, you should put as many obstacles as possible in place that can slow them down. They won't want to rob your home if it will take too long.

"Burglars want easy targets," Danielson says. "They want to get in and out of a residence as quickly as possible and without being detected. Homeowners make themselves vulnerable by leaving doors unlocked or windows open."

You should think of your home security strategy as a series of layers that can create a thick wall of prevention. Several locks, a thick door, short shrubs, great lighting, dogs, home security systems, secure windows and closed garage doors mean that robbers will find your house too problematic.

In addition, Danielson says,

DID YOU KNOW?

At no cost, many local law enforcement agencies perform a residential security survey in which they discuss security and crime-prevention tips.

don't drop your guard when you're on your property. Just because you lock the house when you're leaving doesn't mean you should keep it unlocked if you're hosting a barbecue or taking a nap.

"Even if you're at home, you should keep all structures locked," she advises. "For instance, if you're mowing in your backyard, you may not be able to see a person entering your garage."

You should also remember there's power in numbers. "We always encourage our residents to start a Neighborhood Watch program," Danielson says. "Looking out for each other and reporting suspicious behavior is incredibly effective in reducing crime."

This applies both when you're in town and away from home. If you're traveling, a trusted neighbor should be aware of that and stay on the lookout for items that might make it obvious that you're away. **HD**

Torrey Kim is a freelance writer in North Carolina who counts her two rescue dogs as her most important assets when protecting her home.





Smooth and Fast

Bolster Your Defensive Shooting
with These Speed Reloads and
Transition Drills

By Richard Crays

You've seen it too, haven't you? Most of us do a fair amount of reloading drills on a regular basis, but I see shooters doing it the wrong way all the time. The guy shoots the gun to lockback, relaxes a bit, looks downrange admiring his handiwork and then drops his head down to look at his empty gun. He pops the magazine into his hand, gently lays it on the bench, picks up another mag and gently pushes it into the gun as he looks at it. Then he does the ol' Danny Glover "Lethal Weapon" head roll as he comes up on target to shoot again.

RICHARD CRAYS



Let the magazine fall free after giving it a tug with the support hand if necessary.

At the end of the day, he takes those targets home and shows them to the wife, proclaiming himself a true gunfighter of the 10th degree. Nice and tidy as that is, it does nothing to get you ready for the fight... actually, it probably makes things worse! The following series of drills will get you into shape for smooth and fast shooting for home defense that you should have been training for from the beginning. With all of these drills, you must start dry and empty.

THE RELOAD

Pistol: As the slide locks to the rear, bring the pistol back toward your chest, just under your view of the target (threat). You should be able to see the threat with your direct vision and the pistol with your lower peripheral vision. As you're bringing the pistol

Yikes! Over time he has trained himself to do that in a gunfight. The reload (like these transition drills) should be done smooth and fast. The eyes should never leave the threat. If you train to look down, then you will look down when you can least afford it!

Still looking at this same guy, you see him put the pistol in a gun rug, drop it in his bag and get his rifle out and go through the same: shoot a mag, look down at it to load, look up, snuggle that rifle into the shoulder for two minutes and then slow-fire a magazine full, look down to reload and do it again.



Reloading the AR-15 from either the 5.11 4-Banger Go Bag or the Blade Tech Thigh Pouch.

back, activate the mag release and pull out the magazine. Letting it fall on its own creates a habit of assuming that will happen. If it's dirty, filled with snow or slush, it won't drop free. Train yourself to pull it out and drop it as you reach for that reload. That support hand comes back up with a new magazine and you insert it with authority. Let that support hand rotate and come up over the top of the slide. Grasp the slide, pull back hard and let it go... all without taking your eyes off the threat. Do this about 25 times dry, then load up all your magazines and master it live. If you're light on ammunition, just put three or four rounds in each magazine for the live fire drills.

Rifle: With the rifle never leaving your shoulder, lock the bolt back

on an empty magazine. This stages the weapon for your dry practice. Press the trigger to build the physical movements into your neural pathway (muscle memory), slightly rotate the weapon so you can see the open bolt, rotate the weapon back to vertical and, while keeping the weapon in your shoulder, activate the magazine release, grab the magazine and pull it out.

Drop the magazine as you reach for your reload, grab the next one and insert it with authority. I insert and then tug on it to make sure it locked in. Loading your magazine one or two rounds light increases the likelihood of a good seat. I slap the bolt lock lever rather than pushing on it with my thumb, as the whole hand is less likely to miss that little button in times of stress.

TIPS FOR FAST IMPROVEMENT

A few things to be considered when doing these drills:

- Slow, perfect practice will make you faster in the end than poor, quick repetitions early on.
- Similar operating systems on both weapons can make you faster with both, but practice is the key to being proficient. Your AR-15/M4 works just like a 1911, as an example.
- If the rifle quits working, take a millisecond to try that safety and if you're training with old, cheap ammunition, don't forget to consider hang-fires.
- Moving that rifle off the target to a transition position has, when done poorly or prematurely, resulted in many a bullet hitting the ground unexpectedly.
- When a good quality magazine is used with a good quality AR-15 platform, the bolt will lock to the rear when the magazine is empty. Check your equipment to make sure this is so before going live. If it isn't doing that, fix it before your next gunfight.
- When doing these drills live, load your magazines with one, two and three rounds, respectively. If you load them all with two rounds each, your subconscious will start "gaming" and you won't get the true training benefit of starting from surprise. Load the mags and don't look at which one is going where. You're not doing this to impress anyone, only to make yourself better. When you go to live fire practice, you'll need to find a range that allows moving the rifle outside of the 150-degree rule that most ranges have. The muzzle of that rifle will arc to about 220 degrees with a two-point sling transition and over to 240 or 120 degrees (for southpaws) on a no-sling drill. Some Range-masters get worked up about the muzzle of the rifle pointing up-range. Check the rules before you get started.
- Shooting a handgun with one hand, accurately, requires practice. Punch the pistol out there like you're punching someone in the chest. Raise the thumb on that hand and lean into the pistol. As you raise the thumb, notice that your collateral ligaments (those ridges that appear from your wrist to the thumb) tighten up. This stabilizes and strengthens your grip. Canting the pistol, like you're punching, also lines up the bones and muscles to give you better recoil management.
- If you're wondering about gun to knife transitions, you should consider an old adage first: "If you brought a knife to a gunfight, you were planning on losing."





And establish a two-handed grip and present the gun to the threat.

Bang, you're back in the fight. Transitioning to a different gun will often be faster than a reload. Remember Keanu Reeves in "The Matrix" dropping empty guns and drawing new ones? That's faster than reloading, but since we didn't take the red pill with breakfast, we need to hold on to the empty guns when we transition to a full one.

RIFLE TO PISTOL TRANSITION

The most common transition is from the best weapon to the second best one. This is usually done because we ran out of ammo in the rifle, but could also be necessary because of a malfunction, close-quarters engagement making it impractical (hallway then into a boiler room)

PROS AND CONS

One-Point Sling:

Benefits:

It keeps the gun in front of you and makes transitions quicker. You have more control of it when searching or in crowds.

Problems:

Takes more time to get it out of the way when climbing ladders as you have to pull the sling around your body, and then for most of us, the rifle hangs low and hits our feet on the climb.

Requires working a clip or release to go to a prone or off-shoulder position, and that's a fine motor skill that's not done easily when under stress.

Two-Point Sling:

Benefits:

Allows for rapid transition from right to left shoulder to clear corners or to go to prone.

Provides a handy drag strap for performing a downed victim rescue while allowing you to continue to use the rifle in the fight.

Problems:

Slower to transition than a one-point.

The sling often dangles and can get hung up on door knobs or bushes. To overcome this problem, I have put a Sling Band-it on my Benelli. Made by TAT Jacket, these handy little hook and loop bands hold it all together. (Go to www.SlingBandit.com for more info.)

“ **Remember Keanu Reeves in ‘The Matrix’ dropping empty guns and drawing new ones? That is faster than reloading, but since we didn’t take the red pill with breakfast** ”

or you’re thinking over-penetration of the rifle round is possible and bad.

Regardless of why you want to go to the handgun, here’s how to do it best, and as always, start by doing this with two dry, empty guns. Depending on what sling you have, you can go three ways to get rid of the long gun.

No Sling: From the shooting position, press the trigger. The gun goes click instead of bang. Try to activate the safety. If the gun is empty, it shouldn’t activate. Lower your support hand (the one on the forend) to your front pocket area as you release the grip. The strong hand will be moving to the pistol at the same time the rifle is going to the hip. The pistol comes up and in a practiced one-hand grip, engages the threat.

Two-Point Sling: From the shooting position, press the trigger. Click, no bang. Try the safety, then release the grip and with your strong hand, grab the rear sling swivel. Raise the sling and rifle above your head and with

the rifle behind you and the sling in front, drop it over your head and support shoulder. As the rifle drops, control it with your support hand as the strong hand retrieves the pistol. This will require at least 50 repetitions before calling your ready. Only go as fast as you can go perfect and don’t go live until you can do it without any mistakes.

One-Point Sling: The easy one. This is as simple as check the safety, lower the gun to a suspended position with your support hand as the pistol is retrieved with the strong hand. If it drops uncontrolled, you might regret what stops the rifle at the end. Really.

PISTOL TO RIFLE TRANSITION

You’re coming out of the boiler room and back into the hallway. Time is everything, so don’t waste any of it looking down at that holster. It’s in the same place it was when you got out the pistol. Keep your eyes up and toward the threat zone as you holster the pistol with your strong hand.

Two-Point Sling: Strong hand thumb will go up under the sling, near the rear swivel and raise it up, over your head. As the rifle clears your “cabeza,” pull it forward and catch the forend with your support hand, rotating the stock back to your shoulder.

One-Point Sling: As the strong hand holsters the pistol, the

support hand grips the forend and starts the rifle up to a shooting position. The strong hand catches the grip and finishes the transition back to the shoulder.

Cross-eye Dominant Shooter:

Thought I forgot about you, didn’t you? Nope, because I’m one. Here’s your drill: Rifle is on your left shoulder, pistol on your right. The left hand comes off the grip, grabs the rear sling swivel and rotates the sling up and over the left shoulder, letting the rifle fall to a muzzle-down position, sights to the rear carry position as the right hand recovers the pistol. To go back to the rifle, holster the pistol as you grip the forend with a thumb-down hand position. As the left hand comes up, rotate the rifle to a sights-up position, exchanging the hands on the forend as the rifle reaches the shoulder. The left hand drops back to the grip and you’re back in business.

PRACTICE AND PRACTICE

Be sure to practice these drills slow and dry until you master them. Then, when you need them, they will be there to save your life. **HD**

Richard Crays has 39 years of military and law enforcement experience. He’s on the board of directors for the International Association of Law Enforcement Firearms Instructors, a Master Instructor Trainer and is the senior firearms instructor for a state law enforcement academy.



Tactical Reality

By Louis Awerbuck

An Uncommon Look at Common Sense Firearms, Training and Tactics

No matter how well versed you may be in the martial arts, a rolled-up copy of the Brady Bill is no match for an armed intruder. Some politicians may not like it, but one of the few means accessible to the law-abiding citizen for defending his life and limb is the “great equalizer”—a firearm.

TOP CHOICES

The two most commonly selected guns for home defense

are the handgun and the shotgun. Assuming the homeowner is adequately trained in the manipulation, marksmanship, and tactical use of his weapon of choice—because without operator skill a gun varies from being useless to being a liability—it becomes a matter of deciding which weapon is more suitable for a specific scenario.

Both have salient features, and both have liabilities. The obvious advantage of the handgun is its

portability and relative simplicity of operation. It is, however, an extremely difficult weapon to shoot accurately in real-world stress situations, and its terminal ballistics fall short of satisfactory, irrespective of caliber.

Using the shotgun, on the other hand, gives tremendous close-up power, and it's easier to hit your mark under fighting conditions—but more manipulation training and a more thorough understanding of the weapon and

its ammunition are required than with the pistol.

BETTER FOR HOME D

Which of the two guns is better for home defense? The first question is that of overpenetration—the “What if I miss?” problem. And the answer is that a pistol bullet will penetrate more apartment walls than will buckshot—a much-misunderstood fact. By the same token, using birdshot instead of buckshot to counteract the same potential problem is not the answer either because if the intruder/rapist/mugger is at any distance farther than five or six yards it probably won’t do the job, and if he’s close and situated next to a wall, a load of birdshot will penetrate the wall like a slug before the pellets disperse. An ounce of lead is an ounce of lead, and if birdshot hits drywall in a 2-inch

pattern you may as well be shooting slugs.

Overpenetration is a big consideration in a home defense situation, as family members can often be in the line of fire in rooms behind the intruder.

Question two asks, “Is the shotgun too long for gunfighting at home?” And the answer to that one is “no,” as long as intelligent “ready” positions are used relative to the situation at hand. Weapon retention should, of course, be practiced with both the shotgun and the pistol. Neither protrudes more than the other if employed intelligently.

And no, using a pistol-gripped, stockless shotgun is not the answer, because even at close quarters you will miss if you don’t use the sights, and a stockless shotgun actually projects further from your body than does a fully stocked model.

“So why shouldn’t I just use the shotgun every time and blow that sucker to Kingdom Come when he puts one toenail past my front door?” Because there’s a thing called the law, even to the extent that in some states you have to prove that you couldn’t have escaped from your own house, irrespective of the intruder’s intentions—or actions. And secondarily it ain’t over ‘til it’s over, which means either help has arrived or you have personally bound his hands together—an extremely difficult thing to do when you’re carrying a shotgun.

This final problem is the biggest decision maker of them all. If there’s anything but good ambient light, you will need flashlight illumination to be used in conjunction with either weapon. This means either a flashlight mounted on the weapon, which can be operated



The handgun wins in the portability department.



The shotgun wins the ballistics-and-marksmanship contest.

by the firing hand or, in the case of the shotgun, an on/off override switch in addition to the conventional fore-end pressure switch.

It's all very well to have a pump shotgun with a pressure switch mounted on the fore-end—but if you have to use your support hand to open doors, tie up Mr. Baddie, etc., all you have is one shot and no vision. This may affect your decision whether to buy a pump gun or semiauto or even opt for a handgun.

The bottom line in a home defense situation is that you're attempting to stop a deadly force threat—this does not necessarily mean killing. And even if your intruder is dead (which is the exception to the rule), you still have to control the situation. This isn't a matter of shooting steel or paper targets! You have to finish the job tactically—you can't just walk away. With either weapon

you will need a flashlight (and with the shotgun a carry strap) to transition the weapon out of the downed intruder's reach and to leave your hands free for other duties.

Bear in mind, too, that often you won't shoot, which also leads to tactical problems with either weapon. And if you do shoot, you're responsible for every single projectile you sling downrange.

So what's the perfect answer? There isn't one.

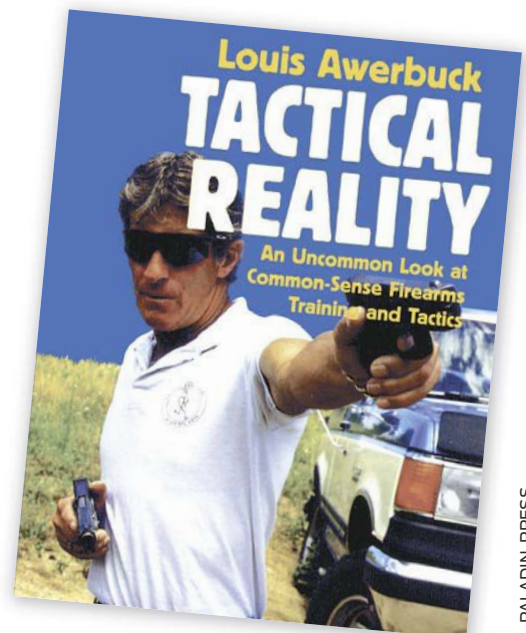
This author's personal preference is to stabilize close to a telephone with a shotgun (a) because of the weapon's inherent power, (b) the fact that it's easier to hit the target with a shotgun than with a handgun, and (c) I will wait for the intruder to come to me, as opposed to hunting him down, unless I have manpower for backup. There's no material possession I own

that would warrant my running headlong into someone else's battlefield of choice, irrespective of weaponry.

PROS AND CONS

As stated above, both weapons have pros and cons. The shotgun wins the ballistics-and-marksmanship contest, as long as you understand the vagaries of shotgun ballistics and patterning. The handgun wins in the portability department, plus possibly some extremely close-quarters tactical points. The best answer is to have both weapons at hand, but, buck-naked at 0300, this is highly unlikely.

Gentlemen, choose your weapons. **HD**



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THINKSTOCK

Powerful Perimeter

Simple, Effective and
Inexpensive Methods To
Strengthen Your First Line
Of Defense

By Charlie Kim

Perceptions and reality are not always accurate. Take home defense, for example.

When you think about a burglar intruding into your home, the first thought that comes to mind is typically the need to improve security around your actual home, including your locks and security systems.

In reality, however, it's sometimes much more crucial to first secure your perimeter—your yard, driveway and the property that surrounds your home. Once someone breaks through the perimeter, they are much more likely to gain access to your house.

To reduce the likelihood of this happening, Police Chief Tim Lentz of Covington, Louisiana, has provided some tips on how to easily increase the security of your own home without the need for expensive equipment.



1. ELIMINATE THE OPPORTUNITY

“For a crime to occur, three things need to happen,” Lentz says. “First, you have to have a motivated offender. Second, that offender has to have time. Third, the offender has to have opportunity.”

Homeowners can really have an impact on only one of those three factors, he says, and that’s the one you should focus on when trying to secure your home.

“The motivation an offender has might be to support his or her drug habit—not much as a homeowner you can do about that,” he says. “One of the ways you can control the time an offender has to commit a crime is to keep him or her locked up—not much as a homeowner you can do about that. The one area where you can have an influence

is the opportunity. Simply by locking your doors, having your lights on at night, or even owning a dog can have an influence on the opportunity provided to a criminal. Chances are they will

not commit a crime at a well-lit home with the doors locked. They just don’t want to work that hard.”

By ensuring that your yard is well lit and the home looks

IN AND OUT IN A FLASH

How Secure Is Your Door?

Burglars typically spend less than 60 seconds getting into your house, according to statistics from the Washington DC Metropolitan Police Department.

If your home is secure enough that it would take criminals longer than that to get in, they will probably pass your house in favor of an easier target. One way to strengthen your perimeter is by ensuring that your door is criminal-proof.

One of the least secure options available is a screen door. Even if you have a lock on it, the screen itself can easily be compromised with a quick swipe of a knife.

In addition, any door with a thin pane of glass is easy prey, because it can be smashed quickly with anything that’s lying around.

The ideal exterior door for your home is made of metal or solid wood, the DC PD advises. In addition, you should have a peephole or other viewer so you can see who is at your door without having to open it.

Door chains can easily be clipped or pulled out of their bolts and are therefore not as secure.

In addition, doors that don’t fit properly in their frames can be jostled out of place or pried open. You should add weather stripping to any gaps around the frame to make sure they’re in place securely.

occupied and secure, you've already stopped a burglar from being tempted by your house as a potential target.

2. ERADICATE HIDING PLACES

Another way to ensure that your perimeter is rock solid is to wipe out any potential areas where burglars could easily conceal themselves. If you give criminals a place to hide, you're making your home vulnerable.

"I have never been a big fan of bushes next to a home, especially large bushes near an entrance," says Lentz. "You have provided a criminal a place to hide and do something bad to you as you approach your home."

The sole exception, he says, would be if you had a prickly type of bush surrounding your home, such as cacti, which would actually deter criminals from hiding anywhere near it.

"What I encourage people to do is to look at the front of their home and see if there are any places someone can hide as you approach your home," he says.

If you do find any such areas, you should immediately remove them so criminals won't find a safe haven in your yard.

3. DON'T ADVERTISE THAT YOU'RE AN EASY TARGET

Although your yard is your personal domain, you could be enticing trespassers if you make your house look like it would be easy to rob.

"Sometimes it's the simple

things, like leaving a window open when they are not home," says Lentz. "Leaving their garage door open, or their car doors open with the garage door opener on the sun visor. When they go out of town, they fail to

have their mail or newspapers picked up."

Make sure you clear packages and newspapers from your front door and driveway, keep your path mowed and clear, and close and lock your doors and

HOW ENVIRONMENTAL DESIGN CAN HELP

Chief Lentz recommends using a concept referred to as Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) to keep your property safe. The National Crime Prevention Council offers the following tips in ensuring that your environment is designed to keep criminals away:

Access Control: Ensure that your property is clearly separated from the public areas. For instance, a gate between the sidewalk and your yard is a great way to alert people to the fact that your yard is not part of the public sidewalk.

Surveillance: Make sure that your yard, parking area, cars and the road are visible from your house so you can always look outside and see what's going on in your area. You can strategically place windows and your parking spaces to enhance this.

Territorial Reinforcement: Use your landscaping and fences to remind potential trespassers that the yard is your personal property.

Maintenance: Even the best-designed yard can be ignored long enough to let criminals think that the house is abandoned. You must maintain your area to let potential trespassers know that you're proud of your property and willing to maintain it. Ensure that any burned-out bulbs are replaced, trim back hedges, mow the grass, bring in newspapers, and repair broken glass or shingles.

For more on environmental design, visit the National Crime Prevention Council at NCPC.org/resources.



Keeping expensive items in your front lawn can serve as "bait" that lures criminals.

DON'T OFFER THEM BAIT!

One factor that's sure to lure criminals into your yard is keeping expensive items in plain view, which can serve as "bait" and make you vulnerable to a break-in.

Keep these commonly displayed items out of sight to help secure your property:

- Bicycles
- Scooters
- Skateboards
- Leaf blowers
- Lawn mowers
- Snow blowers
- Weed trimmers
- Large empty boxes indicating you just bought an expensive item
- Small trampolines

windows. Any time you offer easy access to a criminal, you're increasing your chances of getting robbed, he says.

4. DON'T COMPROMISE YOUR PERIMETER ONLINE

Although you might only think about securing your perimeter in terms of thwarting passersby from entering, the truth is that you can make yourself vulnerable to people both near and far if you're too free with your comings and goings, especially online.

"The one that gets me the most is social media," says Lentz. "People today post way too much information out on the worldwide web. I'm not a big social media guy, but I've seen, through my kids, entire families



out on vacation and posting pictures of themselves at various locations around the world. What have you just told a potential criminal? Nobody is home, come take my stuff."

As common as this is on social media, it's also possible to advertise your empty home in other ways as well. Posting in the classifieds or on Craigslist that you need a house sitter or dog walker while you're out of town is just as risky as putting your vacation photos on Facebook. Even talking too loudly about your upcoming trip to Florida while you're

walking through the coffee shop can make you a target. In short, keep your travel plans to yourself, he notes.

5. BE OBSERVANT OF THE PEOPLE YOU KNOW

According to active burglars, targets are often acquaintances, Lentz says. If you're facing a more experienced burglar, there's a chance he will stake out a resident to learn their target's routine.

Lentz refers to the book "Burglars On The Job: Streetlife And Residential Break-Ins" by Richard

YOU KNOW THAT HIDDEN KEY?

The Burglar Knows, Too

You might think you're being clever by stowing a spare key under your welcome mat or in a fake boulder, but burglars know where to look for them and will readily use them if they can find the keys.

The reality is that if you get locked out of your house and you can find a way inside, then burglars can as well.

To run a test of how secure your home is, you should deliberately lock all the doors and then try and find a way in.

Time yourself and determine how quickly you can access the interior. Assume that a professional burglar can get inside in a fraction of that time. Then use the lessons you learned from your dry run to further secure the house.

DID YOU KNOW?

In the book "Burglars On The Job: Streetlife and Residential Break-Ins," the authors interviewed various burglars. Following are tips that you should be aware of if you're trying to avoid getting robbed:

- Most avoid occupied residences, considering them high-risk targets.
- Most are not deterred by alarms and elaborate locks; in fact, these devices tell them there's something inside worth stealing.
- Some call the occupants. If their phone is ringing when they arrive, they know no one is home.
- Once entering the residence, they first turn to the master bedroom for money and drugs. They also search kitchens, believing that some people keep money in places like a mayonnaise jar.
- Most work in groups, one serving as a lookout while the others ransack the place.
- Many approach a target masquerading as workmen, such as carpenters or house painters.

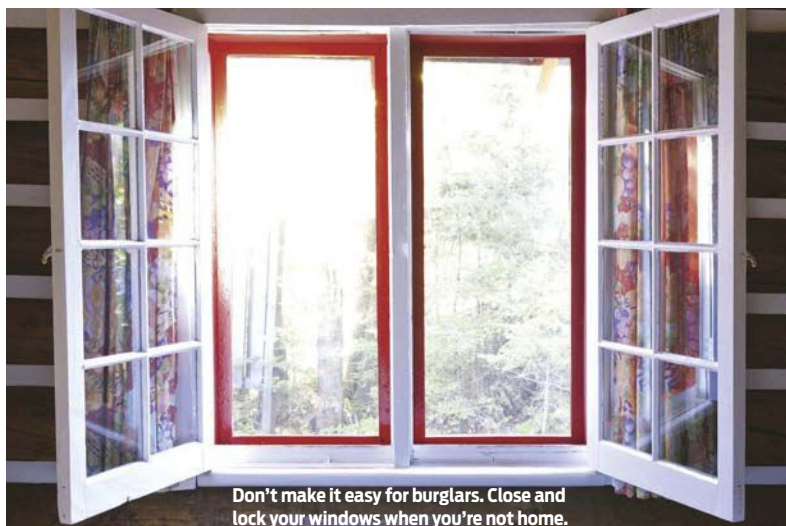
T. Wright and Scott Decker when he outlines what burglars look for in a home. For tips to prevent burglaries, see the accompanying sidebar.

PERIMETER DEFENSE

While you don't have to do something as drastic as digging a moat around your home, being aware of your perimeter defense

and doing everything in your power to deter thieves is definitely the way to go. **HD**

Charlie Kim is a freelance writer and videographer from North Carolina who has a black belt in taekwondo. He is ready to use his martial arts training if he ever has to defend his home.



Don't make it easy for burglars. Close and lock your windows when you're not home.

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An Ounce of Prevention

7 Key Elements Your
Home Defense Plan Must Have

By Abe Elias

Home defense isn't something to take lightly.

To be adequately prepared, it's critical to have an all-encompassing plan that includes training, planning and hardware. In the following story, we will provide the information you need to bolster your home security.

THINKSTOCK



Beretta's CX4 design allows for numerous add-ons.

1 & 2 TRAINING AND ATTITUDE

Put yourself in this situation. A guy breaks into your place, he's holding a handgun and he's shaking like a leaf. Or this... a guy with a black powder rifle breaks into your place, and he has a look in his eye like he could kill.

Neither scenario is likely, of course, but either way you need to be prepared with the right mental attitude and training.

Training will help give us confidence and teach us a set of skills to apply to the situation. Practice will ingrain those skills so that if we can control our emotions, we can pull our training and practice together and be effective.

In most cases a display of force (for example, a firearm) is enough to end the conflict and send an intruder running, but we don't want to depend on that alone. It's safest to make sure we can back up our threat if need be.

In addition to the investment in a firearm and ammunition, it

would be well worth it to add a good training course and regular practice at the local range.

3 THE PLAN

There are a number of different scenarios that can take place in a home invasion: An invasion can take place in broad daylight; at night while the family watches TV; late, when all are asleep.

In the event of a home invasion, the first thing to do is to secure your family. Pick a place in the house that all family members will go to. I realize that this may not be possible in some situations but we have to have a working goal. The purpose of having a gathering point allows us to get our family out of harm's way. After that, any actions we take against the intruders, we know that the intruders are the only ones at risk. An example would be in the event of a late evening break-in—getting all the members to the master bedroom allows us a number of options.

We could hold up and barricade ourselves in the room. Or if we chose to confront the intruders, when we fire off our firearm we know a stray shot won't find a family member because we are aware of where they are. Most importantly, we will know it's an intruder because everyone is accounted for and we aren't about to put a pistol in the face of your teenager sneaking into the house after hours.

4 YOUR ADVANTAGE

You know your home better than the intruder. So, before anything happens, look at the points of access to your home and find the place you can best stand that provides you cover and a clear line of sight to those points.

Walk the house in the dark and get used to walking around your house in the dark. You might know your house in the light, but some people never actually walk around in the dark. It's good practice. Take note of the little



things. In my house if you step just right of the fridge, the air duct below the floor makes a noise. If you know where your family is and you hear that familiar noise you now know where the intruder is.

5 THE HARDWARE

Next, let's discuss firearm options. First off is a traditional standby: the Remington 870.

I chose the 870 because it's a basic solid reliable pump-action shotgun. Available in 12 and 20 gauge, it gives us the versatility to have a firearm that can be friendly for a number of people in the house of various strengths and sizes. Pick the gauge that best fits your situation.

Also, the 870 has a number of aftermarket add-ons to make it a great firearm for home defense. I use a number of ATI aftermarket parts to upgrade my 870 allowing for a light, ammo storage and adjustability.

People feel that a shotgun gives them a better chance to hit the intended target. I can tell you that at 21 feet the pattern doesn't disperse that much, so you still need to practice. I recommend using #4 shot because it has good dispersal and has less of a chance of exiting your

house and traveling to the neighbors.

Second is the Benelli Super Nova (SBR). The version I have has a 14-inch barrel on it and a collapsible stock. The platform is totally adjustable to fit length of pull and makes a compact system to maneuver through your house with.

It's available in 12 or 20 gauge and digests everything you can put through it. It's a pump action like the 870. I like pump actions for these situations since you

have more control over your rate of fire. With a semi-automatic, you just have to pull the trigger and could find yourself emptying your firearm in no time. With a pump action there's a little more to focus on and this can be a benefit, causing you to make your shots count in stressful situations.

My third choice is the Beretta CX4. The CX4 is a pistol caliber carbine available in .40S&W, 9x19 Parabellum and 9x21 IWI. A bonus feature of this firearm is



Shotguns are versatile firearms that use a multitude of different ammo.

ABE ELIAS



An adjustable butt stock makes the shotgun easier to maneuver.

that the magazines are the same magazines as the Beretta 90 series pistols and the PX4. When defending your house you won't have to worry about having different magazines for your rifle and pistol. In the case of a family, one parent could stay back with the children using the pistol and the other could secure a perimeter and you wouldn't have to fuss over magazines.

A carbine format that uses pistol ammo keeps the penetrating

factor down while still providing you with the stability of a large shouldered weapon. Beretta's CX4 platform is capable of supporting add-ons like a light, vertical grips and laser sight.

The carbine also features a picatinny rail so you can mount your favorite red dot for close-quarters shooting. Magazine capacity for the CX4 ranges from 10 for the .40 S&W to 10 or 15 for the other calibers.

Number four is any dependable 9mm pistol. Yes, I know this is vague. If the pistol is for home defense, then your life relies on it, so spend on it accordingly. Some pistols I would recommend are the Glock 19, Springfield XD 4-inch Compact Service model, Smith and Wesson M&P 9mm (4.25-inch barrel) and the FMK9C1.

All these are dependable 9mm weapons. They're not too large, which will allow smaller hands to

gain control. In the end you have to spend some time testing several models and pick out the one that best suits you. If it feels good to shoot, you will shoot it more and get in the practice you will need if something goes wrong.

The 9mm is a good blend of stopping power and penetration. With the right ammunition you can feel secure the fight is inside your house.

Lastly is a good revolver. I prefer revolvers chambered in .357 Magnum and would load it with 38 special. I feel I get a two-purpose firearm that way, leaving the .357 Magnum for other things like woods trekking or hunting.

If you were dealing with a situation where someone needed a smaller frame to be able to hold the firearm better, you could go

to a .38 Special revolver. Revolvers are great firearms for long storage—you can pretty much get dust all over them, gum them up with pocket lint and they still work.

There are a number of revolver manufacturers I would recommend, the top being Smith and Wesson, long known for its dependability and craftsmanship, so you can't go wrong with a wheel gun from them. I would also look at the Chiappa Rhino because of its design. The Rhino has a unique feature with the barrel being fired from the bottom position. So instead of the barrel being on top and the traditional counterweight being below, it's reversed. Reversing the barrel position also puts the muzzle on a lower level closer to the center axis of the pistol,

TOP 5 WEAPONS FOR HOME DEFENSE

1. The Remington 870 pump action shot gun.
2. The Benelli Super Nova (SBR).
3. The Beretta CX4 pistol.
4. A 9mm pistol: Glock 19, Springfield XD, S&W M&P 9mm, FMK9CI.
5. A good revolver, like a .357 Magnum.

reducing muzzle rise. Controlled muzzle rise allows you to get back on target faster to line up your next shot.

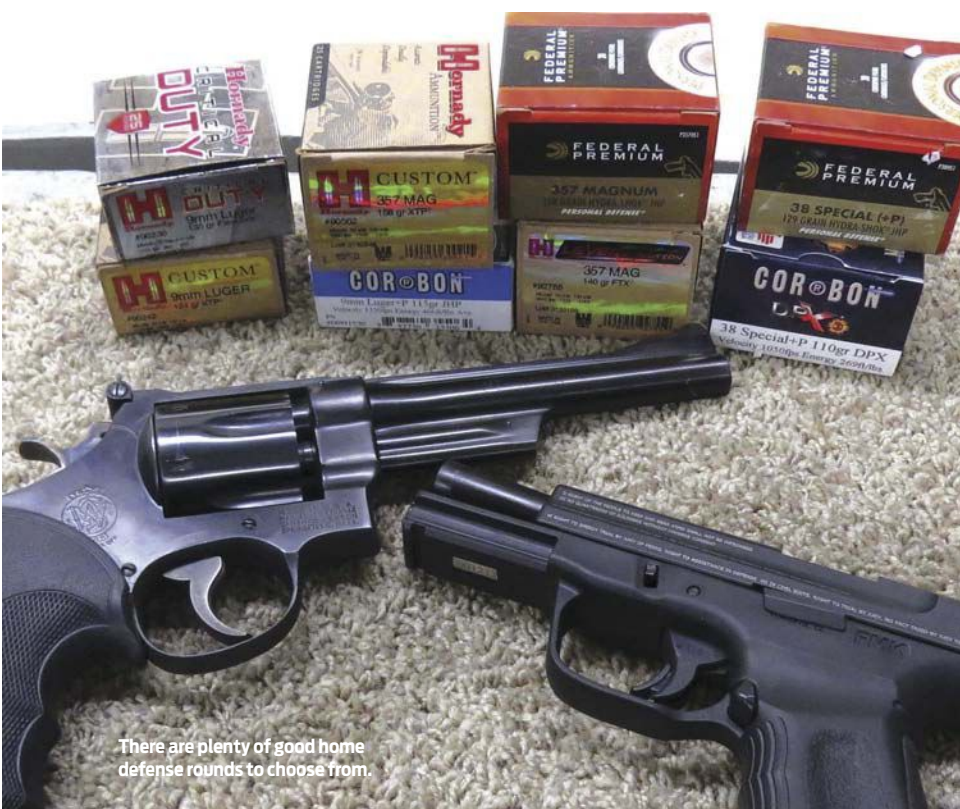
6 AMMO

Ammunition requirements can change with the situation.

Do you live in a tightly built subdivision or in an apartment building? Then you will want to consider frangible ammunition that will reduce the likelihood your shot will penetrate the walls of your living space and harm an innocent bystander.

Even hollow-point ammunition can sometimes penetrate more than people expect, but if you feel that you have a good, safe perimeter around your house the stopping power of hollow-point ammunition can be a benefit.

Full metal jacket ammunition is the cheapest to shoot and functions well in a firearm but the trade-off is that it could easily penetrate through interior walls and even exit your dwelling, especially if you use a rifle caliber.



There are plenty of good home defense rounds to choose from.



off your magazine and the only downtime is while you're inserting the shell.

With the other two, the magazine has to be dropped or the cylinder opened. The ability to doing a rolling reload give the shotgun a great advantage in a home defense situation compared to large caliber pistols that take about the same number of round as a shotgun with an extended magazine.

YOUR CALL

All of the firearms mentioned above would be ideal for home defense for the prepared person. We can't substitute preparedness by simply buying a firearm and letting it collect dust. Take training, practice often and plan.

But don't stop there. You should incorporate all of these elements into your game plan. We can all benefit from an ounce of prevention. **HD**

Abe Elias is a firearms expert and frequent contributor to Home Defender.

7 RELOADING

Reloading is a skill that everyone should practice, so it's best to incorporate it in to your drills. Out of the list of firearms mentioned here, you will notice a couple of different ways of reloading have to be mastered.

With the semiautomatics, the use of the magazine makes the act of reloading easy and has a low learning curve.

Where the revolvers are concerned, it's a bit more difficult to master the speed loaders (for some at least). After much practice you start to get the hang of it.

Amongst the whole group, the shotgun is the easiest to do a "rolling" reloading practice: like the revolver and pistols, you can reload the firearm with practically no downtime if you keep feeding it. A shotgun can be fed through the bottom tube, so literally between shots you can top

HONORABLE MENTION

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Kel-Tec's PMR-30 is a great firearm for self-defense. Many people get hung up on a large caliber firearm for stopping power. At the ranges you will be using a firearm inside the house a .22WMR can be devastating.

A firearm like the PMR-30 has the benefit having low recoil making it easy to control. The PMR-30 also comes with a high-capacity magazine of 30 rounds so you can put more rounds down range before having to reload and don't have the bulkiness of other caliber high-capacity magazines. The firearm is affordable and so is the ammunition, so practice will be less expensive.

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Rail-mounted lasers work on any model of handgun that has an accessory rail.



Man Or Machine?

The Pros and Cons of Laser Sights, How To Decide Which Is Right For You

By Larry Schwartz

Picking a laser sight for your handgun or long gun is a very personal thing because it will depend on several factors: what you shoot, how it's configured, when and where you plan to use it, and your shooting style.

Let's explore what lasers do, what they can't do, their common features and how they attach to your gun so you can make an informed decision that you will be happy with long after you have made your purchase.

STRENGTHS OF LASER SIGHTS

Laser sights provide several advantages that other types of sights do not offer:

- A very fast way to get your gun pointed at your target.
- An excellent training aid to show pistol movement while aiming with your regular sights

and during trigger pull.

- Faster follow-up shots if they're needed.
- They move your focus from the sights on your gun to the target, which gives you a wider field of vision to detect threats.
- You don't block your view of the target with the gun and its sights.
- You don't have to have the gun between you and the target to aim the gun; you can shield yourself behind a barrier and hold the gun next to the barrier and still get the laser beam on the target.
- Aiming only requires you to align one thing with the target, the laser dot, rather than two things, your front and rear sights.
- Rail-mounted lasers also add some forward weight that can help balance your handgun and reduce recoil and barrel rise, which can improve accuracy.



Guide rod-mounted lasers are easy to install but are not as adjustable.

WEAKNESSES OF LASER SIGHTS

Like all things, there is a yin for every yang, and laser sights do have some weaknesses or challenges:

- They can reveal your location if left on continuously or when aiming if there's dust in the air.
- Some sights are not as bright as others so they may be difficult to see in daylight or under brighter lights. This has been addressed in large part by the advent of green lasers, which are much easier for the human eye to see during daylight.
- It makes you dependent on a mechanical device, which may fail or lose power. If you depend on your laser sight for aiming you should also continue to practice with your iron sights.
- Laser sights are also more expensive than on types of sights, ranging from \$200 to \$400 or more, depending on their options.
- Like other types of sights that are not close to the barrel, laser sights can be affected by paral-

lax when shooting at distances other than the one they were sighted in for.

DIFFERENT DESIGNS FOR DIFFERENT USES

There are a variety of different approaches to mounting a laser sight on a handgun and how to control it. The most common methods are grip mounted, guide rod mounted and rail mounted.

Grip Mounted: Pioneered by Crimson Trace, grip-mounted lasers offer several advantages over the other methods. Since they are integrated into the existing grip and do not protrude from the handgun, grip-mounted sights are the least obtrusive of the designs.

The controls are integrated into the grip and you turn the laser on or off by applying pressure to the grip with the fingers of your shooting hand. This gives you instant, one-handed, on and off control, which is a feature that you don't have with the other designs.

It's also a definite advantage if one hand is injured or otherwise unavailable. The only weakness of this design is that there may not be one designed for your handgun. Installation is performed by removing the existing grip and replacing them with the Crimson Trace laser grips. The laser is zeroed using elevation and windage screws built into the sight housing.

Guide Rod Mounted: Another design that integrates the laser sight into the body of the handgun are guide rod lasers.

A laser and battery built into a tube replaces the guide rod in a semi-automatic pistol. In most cases, the controls are built into a lever on the side of the pistol. The guide rod design brings the sight the closest to the centerline of the barrel of all the designs in use today.

The weakness of this approach is that they are only available for a relatively small number of handguns. Unlike other designs, the guide rod lasers do not have the ability to fine-tune them for windage and elevation. The sight is factory set to be within an inch or two of the regular sights at a predefined distance.

Rail Mounted: The most common mounting method, because it can be used on any gun that has an accessory rail, the rail-mounted laser sights offer a good balance ease of control and availability for different models of handgun.

Although some people's hands

WHICH ONE IS FOR YOU? DIFFERENT TYPES OF MOUNTS

Design Style

Features

Grip Mounted

Pro: Easy on and off with grip-mounted finger controls, no need for a rail on the gun.
Con: May not be available on your model of gun, slightly offset from the center line of the barrel.

Guide Rod Mounted

Pro: Internal to the slide so nothing sticks out on the gun, close to the barrel so parallax is minimized.
Con: Not able to adjust for windage or elevation, relatively small number of handgun models they are offered for.

Rail Mounted

Pro: The most common design since it can be used on any handgun with an accessory rail, more features than other designs.
Con: Requires two hands to use in many cases, one to operate the laser and one to hold the handgun.

are large enough for their fingers to reach the controls on rail-mounted lasers, they are designed to be used with one hand holding the handgun and one hand manipulating the controls.

Installation only requires the use of one or two screws to fix the sight in place on the accessory rail. The added weight up front also helps reduce barrel rise and recoil.

SIGHTING IN

Because they are farther away from the barrel than regular iron sights, laser sights will suffer from parallax if you're shooting at something closer or farther than the distance they were zeroed for. For this reason you will need to decide how you want to align the laser sight.

You can align it, or zero it, to coincide with the iron sights at a specific distance that you expect most of your shooting to be within (for instance) 20 feet, the

distance of a normal hallway.

With this method, your laser will point at the same point of aim as your iron sights at your zero distance, but it will be lower or to one side if you're closer than the zero and higher or to the other side if you are farther. As a result you have to adjust more at different distances.

The second method is to align the laser sight in parallel with the barrel or iron sights. With this approach the laser will be slightly to one side or below the point of aim for the iron sights, but it will be that same distance below or to the side at all distances, so there's no need to adjust due to distance to the target.

RED VS. GREEN

For years, the only color you could get a handgun laser in was red and it worked fine in most instances. The scenario where it didn't work so well was in brighter environments where the

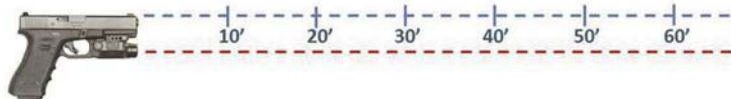
longer wavelength of the red light would get washed out by the brighter light.

The industry met this challenge with the development of green lasers. Initially only a few manufacturers offered green lasers, but now most major makers have them in their product families.

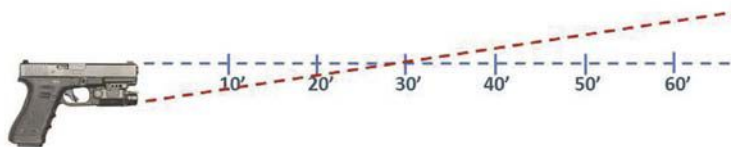
Green lasers have a shorter wavelength than red lasers so they show up better in brighter light. They also, unfortunately, use more power so the batteries don't last as long as the batteries in red lasers. They also reflect back more light from paper targets and light-colored objects than red lasers do, which can be a distraction to some people.

TRAINING

In most cases, the dot from your laser sight will be below your line of sight if your gun is at eye level. For this reason, if you plan to use the laser as an aiming



When you zero your laser sight in parallel with your normal sights the difference between where you aim and where you hit will always be the same.



When you zero your laser sight to coincide with your normal sights the difference between where you aim and where you hit will increase the farther you are from the distance at which you zeroed your laser sight.

device you will need to hold it lower than eye level and practice and train with it that way.

The training challenge is that if you will use both laser and iron sights depending on the situation you will need to practice and train for both situations so that you will not hesitate when you transition from one method to the other.

Although wanting to use two methods of aiming will require more training time, a laser also brings with it training advantages. Instructors all over the country use laser sights to help their students improve their form and trigger pull since the laser shows even the slightest movement of the handgun while pulling the trigger or working on holding steady on a target.

IS THERE A HOLSTER?

The last challenge that comes with using a laser sight on your handgun is how you will carry it. Grip-mounted and guide rod-mounted lasers do not provide a challenge for use with most holsters.

The challenge comes with the rail-mounted designs. The good news is more and more holster makers are bringing new designs to market every day so there will probably be a model out there to meet your needs at some point.

SHOULD YOU GET A LASER SIGHT?

The real question is: Would the way you shoot and the situations in which you would use your handgun as a home defender benefit from using a laser sight?

If you expect that the conditions you might be shooting in will be dark, then a laser sight may make sense for you.

If you expect that you would be shot at and need to shoot from behind cover, then a laser sight might make sense for you because you don't have to hold the gun in line between you and your target.

If you don't expect to be shooting much farther or closer than the distance you zeroed your sight at, then a laser sight might make sense.

TIME TO BUY WHERE TO FIND LASER SIGHTS

The major manufacturers of laser sights for handguns and long guns are:

Crimson Trace at
www.CrimsonTrace.com

Viridian at
www.ViridianGreenLaser.com

LaserMax at
www.LaserMax.com

However, if you don't want to risk the laser beam itself giving away your location then conventional iron sights or a top-mounted optic might make more sense for you.

If you don't want to, or don't have time to practice your shooting techniques with both laser and conventional sights, then a laser sight might actually put you in danger in a real-life situation.

If you're confident in your ability to hit the target quickly in bright and low light settings then you probably don't need a laser sight.

So, get some hands-on experience shooting your gun with a laser sight and see which of these criteria make sense for you. **HD**

Larry Schwartz is an experienced outdoorsman, husband and father who has been writing and teaching about "being prepared" for challenging situations in and out of the home for over a decade.

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THINKSTOCK

Tried and True

By Sean Cooper

Top Handgun Selections To
Keep Your Loved Ones Safe

If you're looking for a self-defense weapon in close quarters like your home, you can't go wrong with a tried and true handgun. If a burglar bursts into your home, you'll thank your lucky stars your handgun is in the drawer of your night table.

But that's only part of the equation. Remember, a handgun is only useful if you've had proper training. Gun training and hours at the firing range are time and money well spent.

Here's our pick of the best handguns to protect your family from those who want to do you harm.

84FS CHEETAH

COMPANY: Beretta

MSRP: \$770

WEBSITE: www.Beretta.com

SPECIFICATIONS:

Barrel Length: 3.82 inches

Overall Length: 6.77 inches

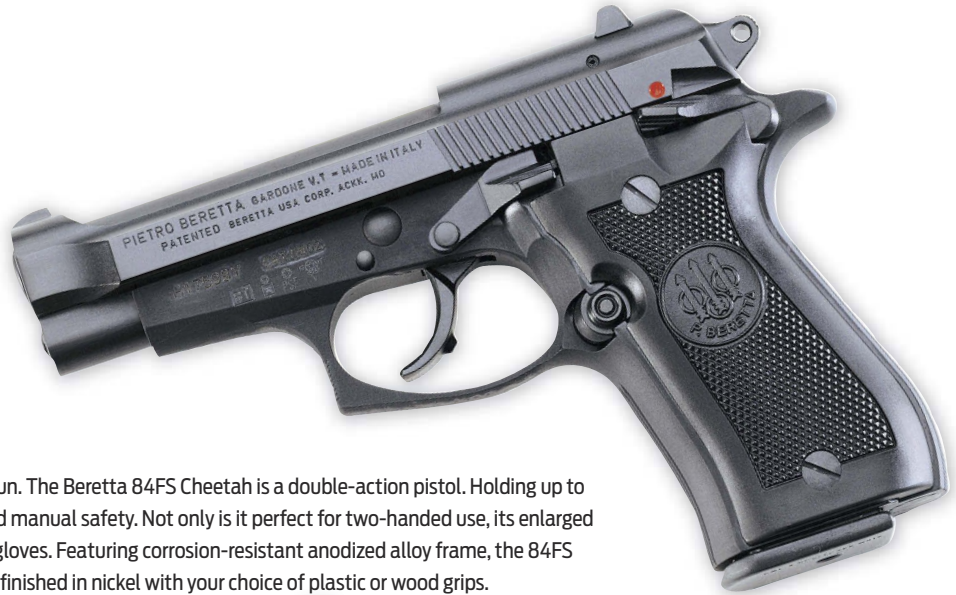
Cartridge: .380 ACP

Action: Blowback

Weight: 23 ounces

DEFINING FEATURES:

Double the action means double the fun. The Beretta 84FS Cheetah is a double-action pistol. Holding up to 13 rounds, it features a frame-mounted manual safety. Not only is it perfect for two-handed use, its enlarged opening makes it ideal while wearing gloves. Featuring corrosion-resistant anodized alloy frame, the 84FS Cheetah is made to last. It also comes finished in nickel with your choice of plastic or wood grips.



9E CENTERFIRE PISTOL

Company: Ruger

MSRP: \$429

WEBSITE: www.Ruger.com

SPECIFICATIONS:

Model No.: 3340

Barrel Length: 4.14 inches

Overall Length: 7.50 inches

Weight: 27.20 ounces

Capacity: 17+1 rounds

DEFINING FEATURES:

Featuring ergonomic grips and narrow slides, the Ruger 9E Centerfire pistol is both comfortable and easy to maneuver. Fire when it matters most—the trigger is only a short distance away from the back-strap. Speaking of the back-strap, it's fully reversible, so you can easily customize the size and feel while you're on the go. Not only is it low-maintenance, it's one of the most reliable guns on the market today.

CZ P-09 FDE – 9MM

COMPANY: CZ-USA

MSRP: \$596

WEBSITE: www.CZ-USA.com

SPECIFICATIONS:

Barrel Length: 4.53 inches

Overall Length: 8.1 inches

Weight Empty: 1.85 ounces

Capacity: 19 rounds

DEFINING FEATURES:

If you're looking for power, look no further than the P-09 from CZ-USA. Featuring an amazing 19+1 round capacity, it blows other 9mm service pistols out of the water. This handgun gives an all-new meaning to versatile—its de-cockers are easy to switch a manual safety in a jiffy. Small, medium and large back-straps means this weapon works no matter how big, or small, your hand is. The Omega DA/SA trigger is reliable, performing when it matters most.



P30

COMPANY: Heckler & Koch USA

MSRP: \$1,054

WEBSITE: www.HK-USA.com

SPECIFICATIONS:

Available Calibers: 40 S&W

Barrel Length: 3.85 inches

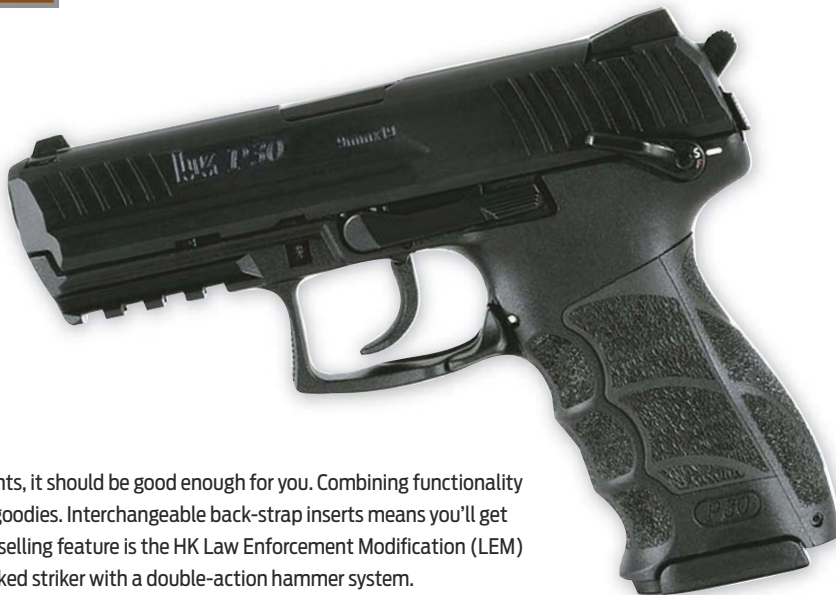
Overall Length: 7.12 inches

Weight Empty: 26.8 ounces

Capacity: 13 rounds

DEFINING FEATURES:

If it's good enough for trained law enforcement agents, it should be good enough for you. Combining functionality with safety, it comes with a number of ergonomics goodies. Interchangeable back-strap inserts means you'll get the most of it no matter how big your grip is. Its key selling feature is the HK Law Enforcement Modification (LEM) trigger system, which couples the strengths of a cocked striker with a double-action hammer system.



M&P45

COMPANY: Smith & Wesson

MSRP: \$599

WEBSITE: www.Smith-Wesson.com

SPECIFICATIONS:

Available Calibers: .45ACP

Barrel Length: 4 inches

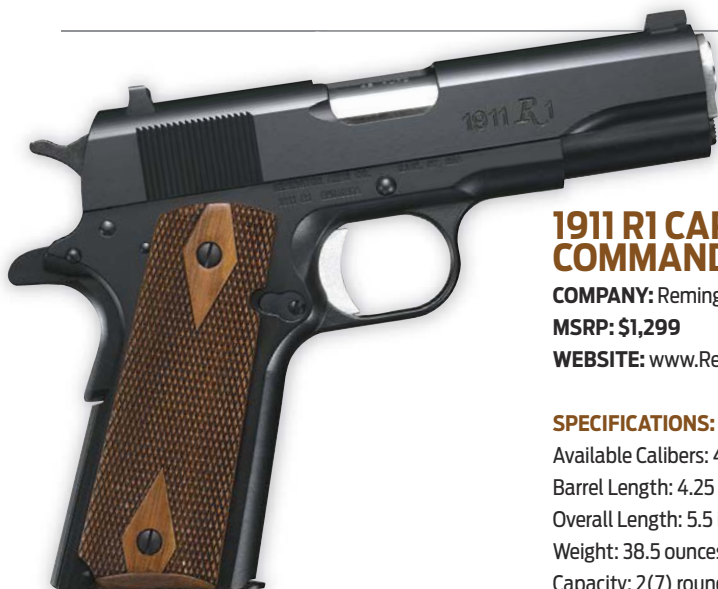
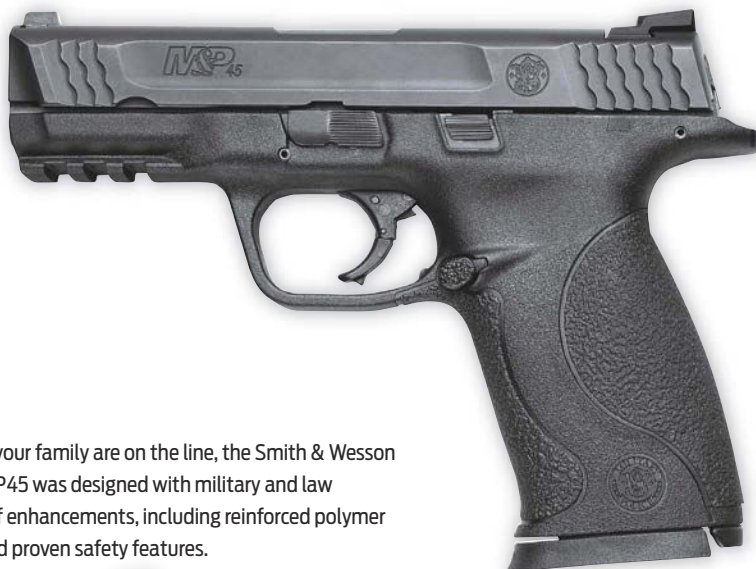
Overall Length: 7 1/2 inches

Weight: 27.7 ounces

Capacity: 10+1 rounds

DEFINING FEATURES:

When there's an intruder in your house and the lives of your family are on the line, the Smith & Wesson M&P45 is the weapon you'll want by your side. The M&P45 was designed with military and law enforcement officers in mind. It comes with a number of enhancements, including reinforced polymer chassis, superior ergonomics, ambidextrous controls and proven safety features.



1911 R1 CARRY COMMANDER

COMPANY: Remington

MSRP: \$1,299

WEBSITE: www.Remington.com

SPECIFICATIONS:

Available Calibers: 45 Auto

Barrel Length: 4.25 inches

Overall Length: 5.5 inches

Weight: 38.5 ounces

Capacity: 2(7) rounds

DEFINING FEATURES:

Remington is known for making top-notch handguns and the 1911 R1 Carry Commander is no exception. You'll struggle to find a better weapon that combines craftsmanship and high performance. Despite measuring 5.5 inches in overall length, it weighs only 38.5 ounces (its parts are made of ultra-light tolerances). It features a crisp trigger, dovetailed front and rear sights, precision-machined slide and frame, and available fine-checked American walnut grips.

90TWO

COMPANY: Beretta

MSRP: \$700

WEBSITE: www.Beretta.com

SPECIFICATIONS:

Available Calibers: .22 LR

Barrel Length: 4.9 inches

Overall Length: 8.5 inches

Cartridge: 9×19mm Parabellum / 9×21mm IMI / .40 S&W

Action: Short recoil of barrel

Weight Empty: 32.5 ounces

DEFINING FEATURES:

Featuring a redesigned frame, you should have no problem with insertion and holster extraction with the Beretta 90Two. Recoil is minimized due to the gun's unique metallic recoil buffer. Beretta takes the guesswork out of firing—the trigger guard is rounded to make sure when you're firing with both hands you're holding the gun in the correct position. It comes in two types (type F and G), which feature your choice of double or single action.



LCP CENTERFIRE PISTOL

COMPANY: Ruger

MSRP: \$379

WEBSITE: www.Ruger.com

Specifications:

Model No.: 3701

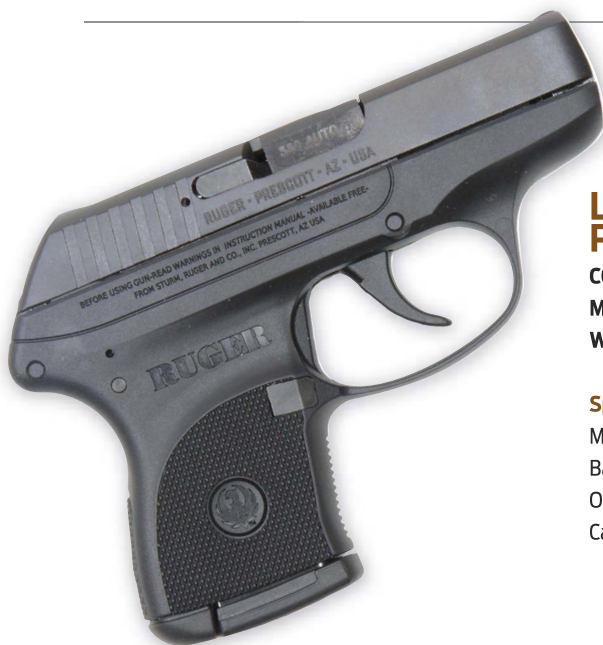
Barrel Length: 2.75 inches

Overall Length: 5.16 inches

Capacity: 6+1 rounds

DEFINING FEATURES:

Ruger LCP (short for "lightweight compact pistols") Centerfire pistols offer the perfect blend of power and versatility all wrapped into one. Whether you're looking for a weapon for home defense, or you're part of law enforcement and looking for a backup weapon, you can't go wrong. The LCP is flexible and able to fit a host of holsters. This rugged weapon features a number of advancements, including fixed front and rear sights.



CZ P-09 – 9MM

COMPANY: CZ-USA

MSRP: \$530

WEBSITE: www.CZ-USA.com

SPECIFICATIONS:

Barrel Length: 4.53 inches

Overall Length: 8.1 inches

Weight Empty: 1.85 ounces

Capacity: 19 rounds

DEFINING FEATURES:

Earlier we took a look at the CZ P-09 FDE. This time we're going to look at its cousin, the CZ-P-09 9MM. It features many of the same features as its counterpart, including small, medium and large back-straps for a highly customizable grip. When darkness falls, burglars are often on the prowl. The integrated 1913 Picatinny rail means it's simple to use when there's little to no light. You can fire at will with the single-action trigger break.



P2000

COMPANY: Heckler & Koch USA

MSRP: \$939

WEBSITE: www.hk-usa.com

SPECIFICATIONS:

Available Calibers: 40 S&W

Barrel Length: 3.66 inches

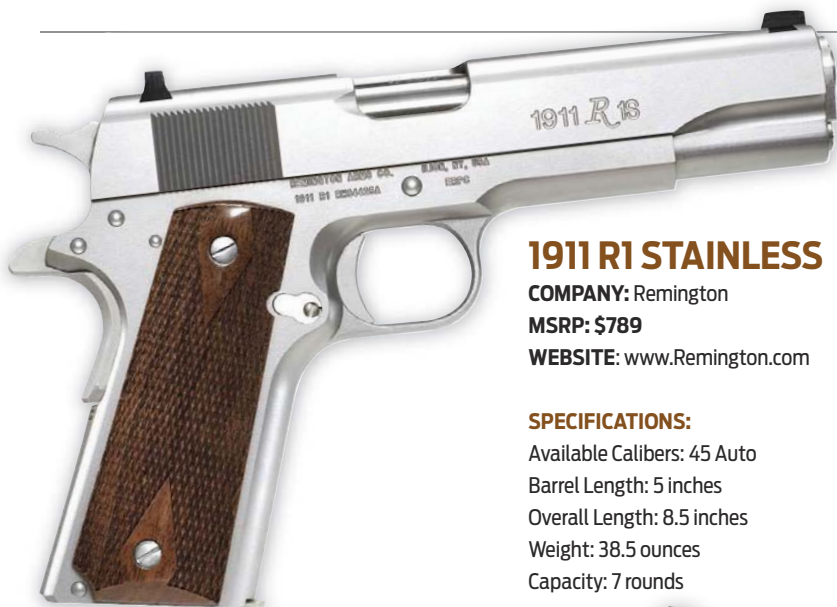
Overall Length: 6.85 inches

Weight: 24.96 ounces

Capacity: 10/12 rounds

DEFINING FEATURES:

The P2000 from Heckler & Koch USA takes the firepower up a notch from its counterpart the P30. It features a reliable trigger system used by law enforcement officers around the world. It combines the strengths of a cocked-striker with a double-action hammer system. If that isn't reassuring enough, this well-crafted, highly reliable weapon was designed to meet the strict stands of U.S. government agencies.



1911 R1 STAINLESS

COMPANY: Remington

MSRP: \$789

WEBSITE: www.Remington.com

SPECIFICATIONS:

Available Calibers: 45 Auto

Barrel Length: 5 inches

Overall Length: 8.5 inches

Weight: 38.5 ounces

Capacity: 7 rounds

DEFINING FEATURES:

With a firing capacity of seven rounds, Remington 1911 R1 Stainless is one pistol you don't want to mess with. It's no coincidence this is one of the most popular handguns on the market. Brought to market way back in 1911, even a century later it remains a highly reliable weapon. Remington borrows from the classic design and adds a slew of upgrades, such as a flat mainspring housing, beveled magazine well and G.I. thumb and grip safeties.

M&P9

COMPANY: Smith & Wesson

MSRP: \$812

WEBSITE: www.Smith-Wesson.com

SPECIFICATIONS:

Available Calibers: 9mm

Barrel Length: 4.25 inches

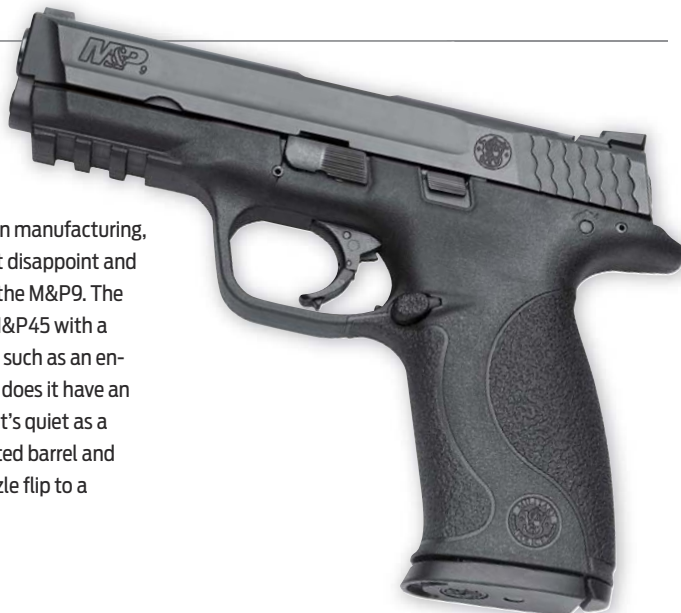
Overall Length: 7.5 inches

Weight: 23.4 ounces

Capacity: 17+1 rounds

DEFINING FEATURES:

A household name in gun manufacturing, Smith & Wesson doesn't disappoint and delivers the goods with the M&P9. The M&P9 is similar to the M&P45 with a whole host of upgrades, such as an enhanced trigger. Not only does it have an adjustable trigger stop, it's quiet as a mouse thanks to its ported barrel and slide, which reduce muzzle flip to a virtual whisper.





M&P Shield .40 S&W

COMPANY: Smith & Wesson

MSRP: \$449

WEBSITE: www.Smith-Wesson.com

SPECIFICATIONS:

Available Calibers: .40 S&W

Barrel Length: 3.1 inches

Overall Length: 6.1 inches

Weight: 19 ounces

Capacity: 6 and 7 rounds

DEFINING FEATURES:

Smith & Wesson M&P Shield is a slender, easily concealable handgun. With its lightweight frame, it's perfect in home defense scenarios. This weapon is living proof that reliable doesn't have to mean complicated. Its simple design means you'll be ready to defend yourself when it matters most. It features a high-strength polymer frame with a black, durable, corrosion-resistant finish, and coated stainless steel slide and barrel.

USP

COMPANY: Heckler & Koch USA

MSRP: \$789

WEBSITE: www.hk-usa.com

SPECIFICATIONS:

Available Calibers: 9mm, .40 S&W, .45

Barrel Length: 4.25 inches

Overall Length: 7.68 inches

Weight Empty: 1.82 pounds

Capacity: 10/13 rounds

DEFINING FEATURES:

Not only is Heckler & Koch USA's USP (short for Universal Self-loading Pistol) a hit stateside, it's in use and beloved worldwide. The USP draws influence from some of the best weapons on the market, including the 1911 pistol. Stress and friction are no match for the USP, thanks to its fiber-reinforced polymer frame stiffened by stainless steel inserts. It features a unique recoil reduction system to reduce the recoil felt when you're firing this powerful weapon.



CZ P-07 – .40 S&W

COMPANY: CZ-USA

MSRP: \$524

WEBSITE: www.CZ-USA.com

SPECIFICATIONS:

Barrel Length: 3.8 inches

Overall Length: 7.2 inches

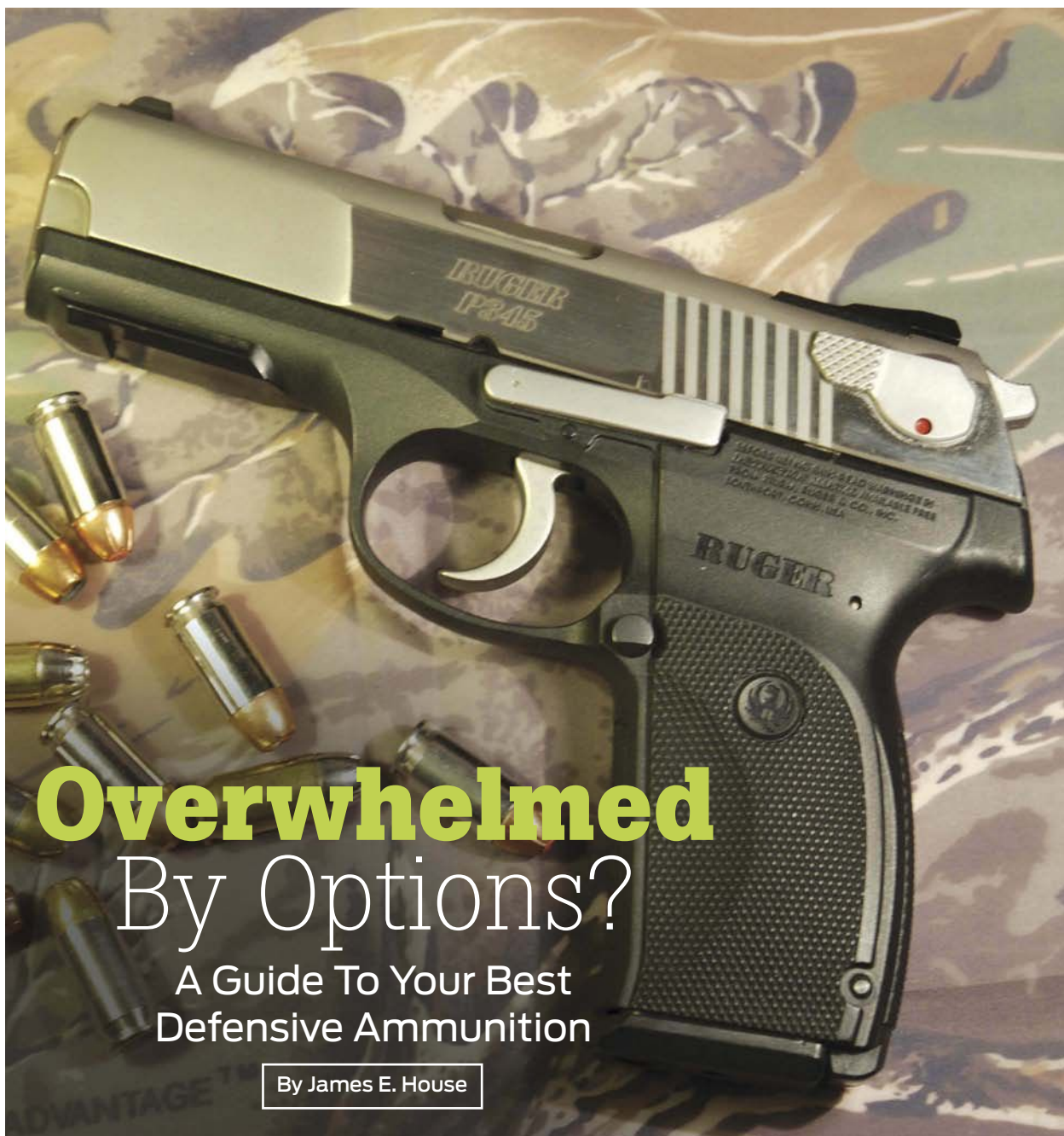
Weight Empty: 1.7 pounds

Capacity: 12 rounds

DEFINING FEATURES:

This isn't your father's weapon. The CZ P-07 is an upgraded version of the already-popular CZ 75 P-07 Duty. This compact weapon features a nitrated slide finish designed to wear longer with increased corrosion resistance. The P-07 borrows the P-09's upgraded trigger shape, which is best suited for home defense or long days at the range. Features include metal three-dot sights and an enhanced magazine spring.





JAMES E. HOUSE

Overwhelmed By Options?

A Guide To Your Best Defensive Ammunition

By James E. House

We live in a day of specialization.

There are vitamin capsules designed especially for men and others for women and even these are subdivided with regard to whether the user is under or over 55 years of age. There are shampoos intended for women and others for men, and within each group there are products for

different types of hair. When it comes to coffee, the number of special flavors is almost unlimited.

With regard to ammunition, the situation is not much different and there are loads designated as target, reduced recoil, defense, hog loads, etc. There's some overlap in usage, but choosing ammunition for home defense can be confusing for some people. Hopefully, this discussion will shed some light on the subject.

CHOOSE YOUR WEAPON

It's important to consider carefully the type of firearm chosen for home defense. Handguns, shotguns and rifles are all offered in styles that are suitable for defensive use. In most situations convenience and accessibility point to the selection of a handgun, but in other situations—particularly in rural or remote areas—a rifle or shotgun may be more appropriate. Because handguns are often chosen for defense, the majority of this discussion will be devoted to handgun ammunition.

After a handgun has been chosen, the choice of ammunition may be almost as important, especially for a small-caliber handgun. Such low-powered centerfire calibers as .25, .32 and .380 Auto, and all rimfires, need as much performance as possible and appropriate ammunition can help. Fortunately, the ammunition manufacturers know this and have responded with excellent products.

ADVANCEMENTS

The developments in defensive ammunition have been rapid with the interest in defense and concealed carry that has reached epidemic proportions.

The objective when using a firearm for defense is to be able to keep someone or something from doing you harm. If the perpetrator is rational, the mere fact that you have any firearm available to protect yourself is sufficient reason to go elsewhere quickly.

DON'T SHOOT A HANDGUN?

Try These Shotgun and Rifle Loads

Special loads are also available for those who select a shotgun or rifle for defense. Traditionally, buckshot loads have been the choice when using a shotgun, but Winchester offers 12- and 20-gauge shotgun loads in the Defender line that utilizes a slug that separates into three large segments on impact. As if that were not innovative in itself, Winchester also produces a load in 12 gauge that features a 1-ounce slug that has three 00 buckshot above it.

However, that's sometimes not the case, so the firearm must be relied on to make it impossible for the perpetrator to press the attack. When that happens, you must rely on a firearm to render the assailant unable to cause you harm. Your firearm gives you the means to accomplish this, and it's the bullet that transmits energy to the assailant.

In the press today we sometimes hear of a firearm that holds 10 bullets, but a magazine or cylinder holds cartridges. The bullet is the projectile whereas a cartridge consists of a case, a primer, powder and a bullet.

Of these components, it's only the bullet that transmits energy to stop an attacker. Therefore, a cartridge of defense ammunition may differ very little from several other types—except with regard to the type of bullet.

THE BULLET

In order to do its job, a bullet must transmit its kinetic energy to the target rapidly and, preferably, completely.

It's desirable for the bullet not to pass completely through the target because of potential harm to someone or something behind

the target. As a result, except where prohibited by military convention, bullets utilized in defensive ammunition are almost universally of an expanding type to transmit energy quickly and facilitate tissue disruption without undue penetration.

In order to ensure expansion, the bullets have hollow points that expand on impact. However, fragmentation of the bullet is not normally a desirable characteristic so most bullets used in defense ammunition have a tough outer jacket that encloses a softer lead core. Bonding of the core and jacket to prevent their separation on impact is a common characteristic of defensive bullets that must perform reliably over a range of velocities. Recent developments have led to bullets that do not have a separate jacket and core but rather are made of a solid copper alloy.

Ammunition companies seek to develop a bullet that penetrates adequately but not excessively, expands reliably in a variety of situations and does not fragment on impact. Nominal ballistics for a given weight bullet in a specific caliber do not vary greatly because the



To be effective, large calibers such as the .45 Colt (left) do not need as much bullet expansion as does the little .380 Auto (right).

Sporting Arms and Ammunition Manufacturers Institute (SAAMI) regulates such matters.

POPULAR CHOICES

There's an old saying that your survival knife is the knife you have with you when you must survive. An equivalent saying with regard to defense ammunition is that your defense ammunition is what you have loaded in your firearm when you have to defend yourself.

Therefore, it makes good sense to choose your ammunition carefully before some type of critical encounter arises. Fortunately, there are a considerable number of excellent choices and most of them are available in all popular calibers.

The most popular handgun calibers for defense are the .380 Auto, 9mm Luger, .38 Special, .357 Magnum, .40 S&W and .45 Auto. Other calibers used less frequently include the .32 Auto, .357 SIG, 10mm Auto, .44 Special, .44 Magnum and .45 Colt.

A handgun in any of these calibers can provide protection if

used correctly. Many handguns chosen for defense have short barrels and with a given type of cartridge, such handguns give lower velocity than those having longer barrels. In order to provide the most dependable ammunition, some manufacturers produce cartridges specifically for use in short barrels utilizing bullets that expand reliably even at a lower velocity.

If the choice of handgun for defense is a revolver, as long as the cartridges can be loaded in the cylinder easily, there's no issue with feeding. However, in the case of semiautomatics, some types of ammunition may not feed reliably because the shape of the bullet nose may not match the contour of the feed ramp or the ramp may have a rough surface.

If you're going to rely on an autoloader for defense, make sure that the cartridges you choose will feed reliably from the magazine. In the past, fully jacketed bullets ("hard balls") were utilized almost exclusively in ammunition intended for use in autoloaders so they fed reliably

only with that type of bullet.

Having described defensive ammunition in general terms, it's appropriate to look more closely at some specific types.

CRITICAL DEFENSE

Several years ago, Hornady introduced the Critical Defense line of ammunition in most popular handgun calibers.

The bullets, known as the FTX line, are a hollow-point design but have a polymer insert in the cavity. The insert prevents the cavity from becoming filled with material, but the hollow cavity facilitates rapid expansion.

I have tested Critical Defense loads in several calibers, and the performance has been excellent. Velocities have been equal to those advertised and expansion is dramatic even when short-barreled handguns are used. Realizing that some people prefer a compact revolver chambered for the .22 WMR, Hornady has recently introduced a Critical Defense load in that caliber featuring a .45-grain FTX bullet. The

USE RELOADS? MAYBE NOT A GREAT IDEA

Many shooters reload their own ammunition. So it's natural to ask, "Why not use reloads for defense?" There are two issues involved:

1. If you use some favorite handload in a defensive situation, someone may try to make the case that you produced a particularly potent concoction and were in a truculent mood looking for an opportunity to use it. If you use hand-loaded ammunition, you should stick to moderate loads listed in handbooks and not use some exotic bullet.
2. Make sure that you have resized cases full length so they will feed reliably in an autoloader or easily enter the cylinder of a revolver.

Hornady Critical Duty ammunition is similar Critical Defense, but with a different jacket design to facilitate penetration of barriers.

DEFENDER

Bullets in which the core and jacket are bonded have become popular, and the Winchester Defender loads are of that type. Offered in calibers that range from .22 WMR to .45 Colt, Defender has earned an excellent reputation.

In 9mm Luger, two loads are offered that feature bullets weighing 124 and 147 grains. The .38 Special offering utilizes a 130-grain bullet that is loaded to +P specifications. Defender loads in .40 S&W are available in 165- and 180-grain weights.

Recognizing that shooters need to practice with a load that duplicates that chosen for defense, Winchester offers the Train & Defend line. The idea is to offer a less expensive round loaded with a fully jacketed bullet for training and a round loaded with a bonded hollow-point bullet loaded to the same velocity for defense.

In each case, the loads are designed to produce somewhat less recoil than does full-power ammunition. The matching Train & Defend loads are available in .380 Auto, 9mm Luger, .38 Special, and .40 S&W calibers.

HOLLOW POINT

For many years, Federal has produced premium defense am-

munition that employs the Hydra-Shok bullets. These bullets feature a jacketed hollow-point design with notches in the jacket to facilitate expansion. A hardened center post in the cavity helps keep the hollow point from becoming clogged with material that would retard expansion.

Remington's defense ammunition utilizes a hollow-point bullet known as the Golden Saber, featuring a brass jacket that has notches to facilitate expansion. Interestingly, the notches in the jacket are cut diagonally to the axis of the bullet.

MORE SOLID CHOICES

Speer offers a complete line of defense ammunition in their Gold Dot products. Gold Dot bullets are formed by depositing a heavy plating of copper onto a core made of a lead alloy, which results in bonding that prevents separation of core and jacket.

These bullets are produced in a wide variety of calibers and weights as components for those who hand-load ammunition as well as in factory loads. Tests of bullet performance and

expansion after penetration of various types of barriers have been conducted and in each case weight retention is virtually 100 percent. Factory loads are available in calibers from .25 Auto to .45 Colt. Speer also offers Gold Dot loads that feature bullets designed to expand even when fired at the lower velocities produced by short-barreled handguns. This Short Barrel line includes popular center-fire calibers as well as .22 WMR.

Fiocchi offers an extensive line of defense ammunition that's loaded with the XTP bullets produced by Hornady. It's not possible to review the extensive array of defense ammunition, but it should be noted that excellent products are available from Cor-Bon, Magtech and others. **HD**

Jim House, emeritus professor of chemistry at Illinois State University and an adjunct professor at Illinois Wesleyan University, is a contributing editor for "The Varmint Hunter," "The Backwoodsman," and other publications.

DON'T SHOOT A HANDGUN?

Try These Shotgun and Rifle Loads

Special loads are also available for those who select a shotgun or rifle for defense. Traditionally, buckshot loads have been the choice when using a shotgun, but Winchester offers 12- and 20-gauge shotgun loads in the Defender line that utilizes a slug that separates into three large segments on impact. As if that were not innovative in itself, Winchester also produces a load in 12 gauge that features a 1-ounce slug that has three 00 buckshot above it.



ol' Faithful

By Home Defender Staff

American Ingenuity Meets European Refinement: The 1911

At a recent tactical gun course we attended, we asked the instructor the obvious question: “What’s your favorite weapon?”

The response was, “Although we teach this course with a Glock 17, my weapon of choice is the 1911.”

When asked why the 1911, the answer was simple and to the point: “Because nothing else feels like it.”

So we went to renowned firearm manufacturer SIG Sauer and asked them to tell us about their 1911 line.

“The legendary 1911 design has been brought

into the 21st century with the refinement today’s shooters demand,” they said. “The SIG Sauer 1911 proves that close tolerances equal complete reliability and need not be incompatible in an off-the-shelf pistol. SIG Sauer has introduced clean, distinct lines that American shooters have embraced, while retaining the crisp trigger pull, classic ergonomics, and exceptional accuracy they expect.”

Indeed. If you’re in the market for reliability and accuracy for home defense, two obviously-critical components, behold some highlights from their extensive 1911 line.

The 1911 STX

from the SIG Sauer Custom Shop is a two-tone 1911 that's loaded with features. This non-railed pistol features a Nitron slide over a Natural Stainless frame and is accented by beautiful custom wood grips. The slide is further accented by polished cocking serrations and a flat top, which enhances the two-tone aspect of this pistol. The slide is topped off with adjustable combat night sights while the frame is out-fitted with a magwell for fast smooth reloads.

The all stainless steel frame and slide of the STX are machined to exacting tolerances and hand-fitted to insure reliability and performance. The frame features 25-line per inch checkering on the front strap—while the mainspring housing has 20-line per inch checkering—and both the frame and slide are de-horned for comfortable full-size carry. Like all SIG Sauer products, the 1911 STX pistol contains only premium internal parts including a match grade barrel, hammer/sear set and trigger. For safety the 1911 STX features a beavertail grip safety with speed bump, extended ambidextrous thumb safety, firing pin safety and hammer intercept notch and ships in a plastic gun case with cable lock.

Item Number	1911-45-STX
Caliber	45 ACP
Action Type	SAO
Trigger Pull DA	N/A
Trigger Pull SA	5 lbs
Overall Length	8.7 inches
Overall Height	5.7 inches
Overall Width	1.4 inches
Barrel Length	5.0 inches
Sight Radius	6.5 inches
Weight w/Mag	41.6 ounces
Mag Capacity	8 Rounds
Sights	Adjustable Combat Night Sights
Grips	Burled Maple Grips
Frame Finish	Stainless
Accessory Rail	No
Features	Beavertail Frame, Ambidextrous Safety, Flat Top, Magwell
MSRP	\$1,213

The 1911 C3

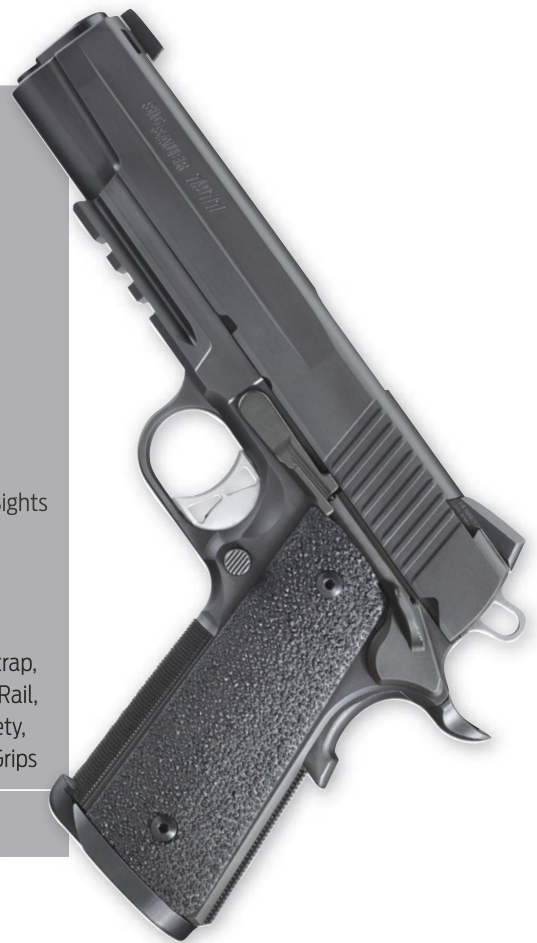
is a 7+1 compact .45ACP featuring rosewood custom wood grips and is available in a Two-Tone finish. Weighing in at just under 30 ounces unloaded, each 1911 C3 is machined to exacting tolerances and hand-fitted to insure reliability and performance. The C3 frame is machined from a lightweight alloy and includes 25-line per inch front strap checkering and checkered mainspring housing. SIG Sauer uses only premium internal parts such as a match grade barrel, hammer/sear set and trigger. The C3 is also available in a durable Nitron finish.

Item Number	1911CO-45-T-C3
Caliber	45 ACP
Action Type	SAO
Trigger Pull DA	N/A
Trigger Pull SA	5 lbs
Overall Length	7.7 inches
Overall Height	4.8 inches
Overall Width	1.4 inches
Barrel Length	4.2 inches
Sight Radius	5.7 inches
Weight w/Mag	29.5 ounces
Mag Capacity	7 Rounds
Sights	Low-Profile 3-Dot Contrast Sight
Grips	Slim Profile Custom Rosewood Grips
Frame Finish	Black Hard Anodized
Slide Finish	Stainless
Accessory Rail	No
Features	Custom Wood Grips, Checkered Front Strap
MSRP	\$1,213

The 1911 Tactical Operations model

features a SAO trigger, low-profile night sights, integral accessory rail, ambidextrous safety, Magwell and Ergo XT grips. Also available in a threaded barrel version.

Item Number	1911R-45-TACOPS
Caliber	45 ACP
Action Type	SAO
Trigger Pull DA	N/A
Trigger Pull SA	5 lbs
Overall Length	8.7 inches
Overall Height	5.5 inches
Overall Width	1.4 inches
Barrel Length	5.0 inches
Sight Radius	6.5 inches
Weight w/Mag	41.6 ounces
Mag Capacity	8 Rounds
Sights	Low-Profile Night Sights
Grips	Ergo XT Grips
Frame Finish	Nitron
Slide Finish	Nitron
Accessory Rail	Yes
Features	Checked Front Strap, Integral Accessory Rail, Ambidextrous Safety, Magwell, Ergo XT Grips
MSRP	\$1,213



The 1911 Scorpion

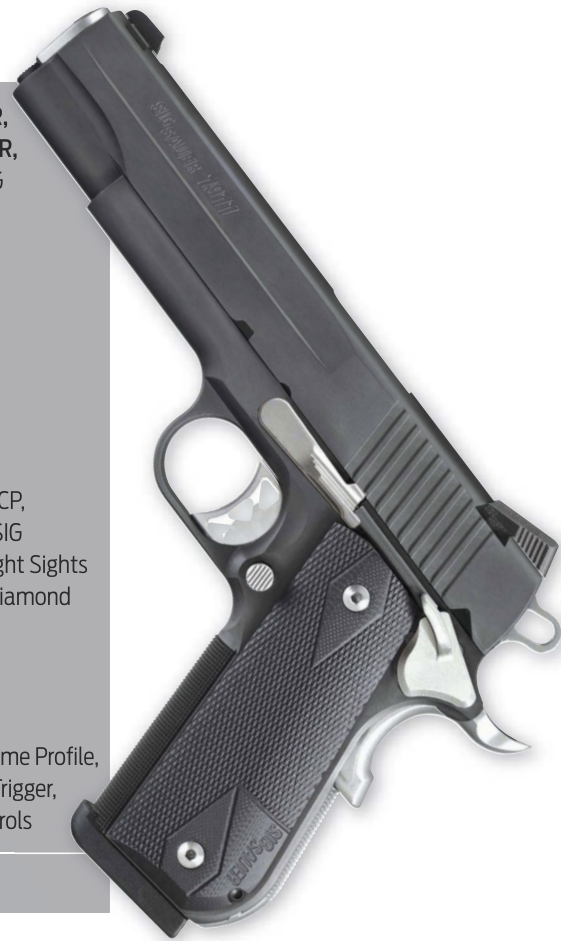
is truly unique, from its desert tan Cerakote-coated stainless frame and slide. Complete with a 5.0-lb SAO trigger, eight-round magazine, and low-profile night sights. The 1911 Scorpion features Hogue's innovative Magwell Grip Set. The advanced design combines grip plates and main spring housing in an integrated magazine well extension that promotes rapid magazine changes. Manufactured from G10, the Magwell grips provide strength and light weight in a highly functional assembly. The grips feature Hogue's Piranha texture for excellent retention in any environment and come in a multi-layer green and black pattern that accents the Scorpion's Cerakote Flat Dark Earth finish.

Item Number	1911R-45-SCPN
Caliber	45 ACP
Action Type	SAO
Trigger Pull DA	N/A
Trigger Pull SA	5 lbs
Overall Length	8.7 inches
Overall Height	5.5 inches
Overall Width	1.4 inches
Barrel Length	5.0 inches
Sight Radius	6.5 inches
Weight w/Mag	41.6 ounces
Mag Capacity	8 Rounds
Sights	Low-Profile Night Sights
Grips	Hogue Custom G10 Grips
Frame Finish	Custom Flat Dark Earth
Slide Finish	Custom Flat Dark Earth
Accessory Rail	Yes
Features	Front Cocking Serations, Hogue Custom G10 Grips
MSRP	\$1,213



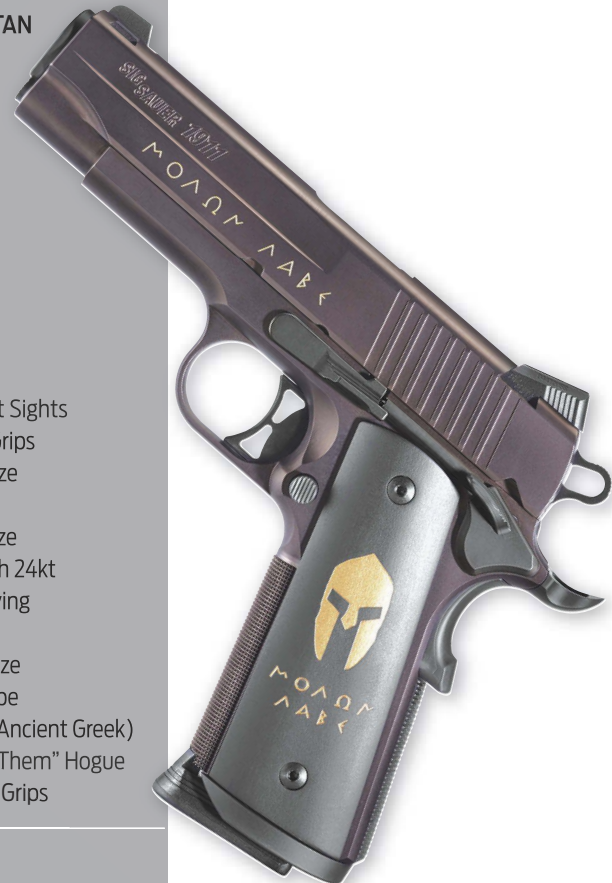
The 1911Fastback Nightmare pistol features a stainless steel frame with rounded grip and mainspring housing. Each pistol is built using premium internal parts including a match grade barrel, hammer/sear set and trigger. The all-Nitron coated frame and slide is contrasted with natural stainless controls, barrel bushing extractor and grips screws. The Nightmare is finished with a set of black G10 double diamond grips that makes this 1911 SIG Sauer look as good as it performs.

Item Number	1911F-45-NMR, 1911F-357-NMR,
Caliber	45 ACP, 357 SIG
Action Type	SAO
Trigger Pull DA	N/A
Trigger Pull SA	5 lbs
Overall Length	8.7 inches
Overall Height	5.5 inches
Overall Width	1.4 inches
Barrel Length	5.0 inches
Sight Radius	6.5 inches
Weight w/Mag	41.6 ounces
Mag Capacity	8 Rounds 45 ACP, 9 Rounds 357 SIG
Sights	Low-Profile Night Sights
Grips	G-10 Double-Diamond Grips
Frame Finish	Nitron
Slide Finish	Nitron
Accessory Rail	No
Features	Flashblack Frame Profile, Skeletonized Trigger, Stainless Controls
MSRP	\$1,242



The 1911 Spartan features a full-sized, precision-built 1911 in a unique oil-rubbed bronze PVD finish. This striking classic is offset with black controls and black custom grips emblazoned with the Spartan Helmet design. Both the grips and the slide are engraved with 24KT gold in the original Greek: "MOLON LABE" – translated as "Come and Take Them."

Item Number	1911R-45-SPARTAN
Caliber	45 ACP
Action Type	SAO
Trigger Pull DA	N/A
Trigger Pull SA	5 lbs
Overall Length	8.7 inches
Overall Height	5.5 inches
Overall Width	1.4 inches
Barrel Length	5.0 inches
Sight Radius	6.5 inches
Weight w/Mag	41.6 ounces
Mag Capacity	8 Rounds
Sights	Low-Profile Night Sights
Grips	Hogue Spartan Grips
Frame Finish	Oil-Rubbed Bronze
Slide Finish	Nitron Finish
Accessory Rail	No
Features	Oil-Rubbed Bronze Finish, Molon Labe Engraved Slide (Ancient Greek) "Come and Take Them" Hogue Custom Spartan Grips
MSRP	\$1,356



The Sig Sauer

Extreme Series pistols

feature a Nitron-coated machined stainless steel slide and frame. Built standard with low-profile night sights, a built-in accessory rail, front cocking serrations and SAO trigger. Aggressive styling is provided by Hogue Extreme Series grips. These black and gray G10 grips with integrated magwell, feature Hogue Piranha texture and the SIG Sauer logo.

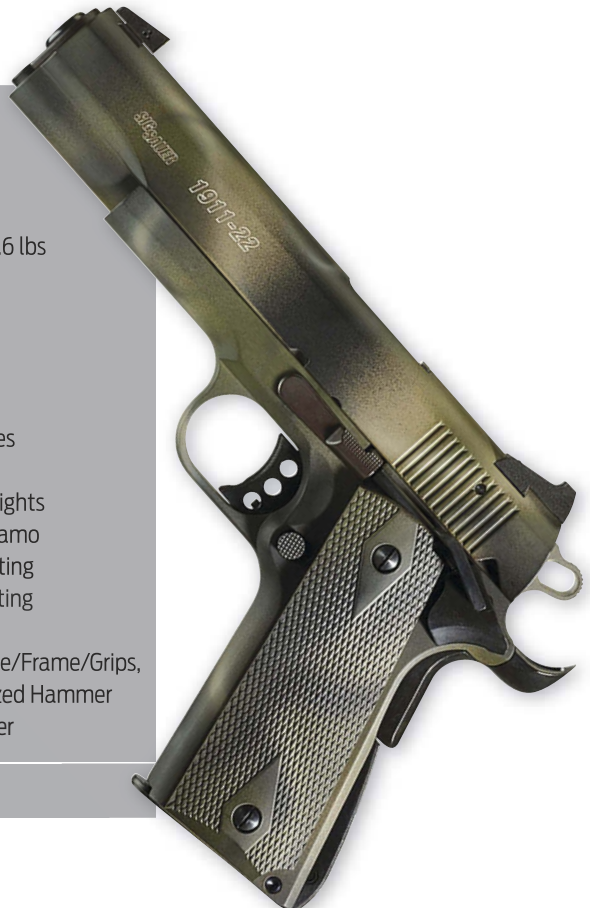
Item Number	1911R-45-XTM-BLKGRY
Caliber	45 ACP
Action Type	SAO
Trigger Pull DA	N/A
Trigger Pull SA	5 lbs
Overall Length	8.7 inches
Overall Height	5.5 inches
Overall Width	1.4 inches
Barrel Length	5.0 inches
Sight Radius	6.5 inches
Weight w/Mag	41.6 ounces
Mag Capacity	8 Rounds
Sights	Low-Profile Night Sights
Grips	Hogue Custom G10 Grips
Frame Finish	Nitron
Slide Finish	Nitron
Accessory Rail	Yes
Features	Accessory Rail, Ambi, Low Profile Night Sights, Magwell, Flat Trigger
MSRP	\$1,213



The 1911-22

is built to the same dimensions as the full-sized 1911 pistol. It features a lightweight metal frame and slide, low-profile three-dot sights, working grip safety and ambidextrous thumb safety, making the 1911-22 a perfect training tool for 1911 fans as well as a fun plinking pistol for all ages. This Camo version is coated in a black and green camo coating with camo grips.

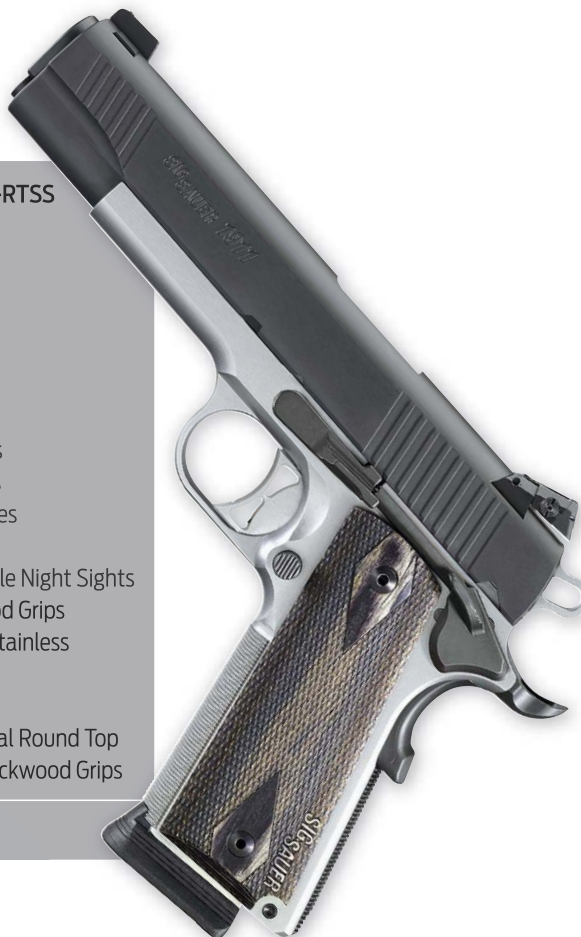
Item Number	1911-22-C1
Caliber	.22LR
Action Type	SAO
Trigger Pull DA	N/A
Trigger Pull SA	4.2 lbs - 5.6 lbs
Overall Length	8.5 inches
Overall Height	5.5 inches
Overall Width	1.4 inches
Barrel Length	5.0 inches
Sight Radius	5.4 inches
Weight w/Mag	34.0 ounces
Mag Capacity	10 Rounds
Sights	Contrast Sights
Grips	Polymer Camo
Frame Finish	Camo Coating
Slide Finish	Camo Coating
Accessory Rail	No
Features	Camo Slide/Frame/Grips, Skeletized Hammer and Trigger
MSRP	\$518



Traditional Reverse Two-Tone

features the recognizable “round-top” 1911 slide profile, front cocking serrations and a lightweight, three-hole trigger. Standard on all models are a match-grade barrel, flat mainspring housing and speed bump grip safety. Front straps have 25LPI checking and the mainspring housing has 20LPI for optimum grip and user comfort. The 1911 Traditional Reverse Two-Tone is a full-size 1911 featuring a natural stainless steel frame and Nitron-coated stainless slide. Black control levers, low-profile Siglite night sights, and Hogue Black Diamondwood checkered grips round out the sleek look.

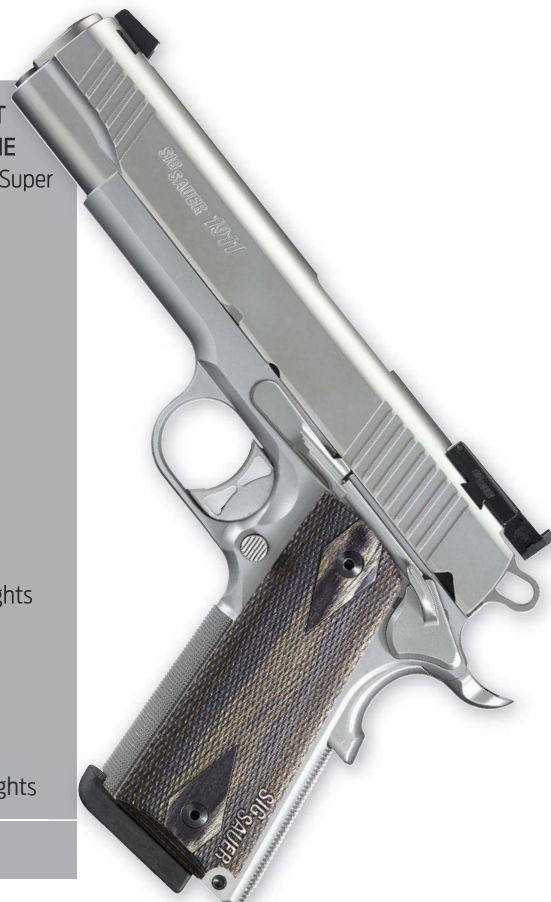
Item Number	1911T-45-RTSS
Caliber	.45 ACP
Action Type	SAO
Trigger Pull DA	N/A
Trigger Pull SA	5.0 lbs
Overall Length	8.7 inches
Overall Height	5.5 inches
Overall Width	1.4 inches
Barrel Length	5.0 inches
Sight Radius	6.5 inches
Weight w/Mag	41.6 ounces
Mag Capacity	8 Rounds
Sights	Low-Profile Night Sights
Grips	Blackwood Grips
Frame Finish	Natural Stainless
Slide Finish	Nitron
Accessory Rail	No
Features	Traditional Round Top Slide, Blackwood Grips
MSRP	\$1,142



The 1911 Traditional Match Elite

is the first SIG Sauer 1911 to be offered in a caliber other than .45 Auto. A full-size 1911, the Match Elite chambered in .45ACP, is available as a two-tone with a natural stainless steel frame and a Nitron-coated slide. The 9mm and .40S&W Match Elite models are also full sized, but feature a natural stainless slide and frame, white controls and adjustable target sights. The Match Elites feature Hogue custom wood checkered grips. This version is available in 9mm, .40S&W and 38 Super.

Item Number	1911T-40-SME, 1911T-9-SME, 1911-38-SME
Caliber	9mm or 40S&W, .38 Super
Action Type	SAO
Trigger Pull DA	N/A
Trigger Pull SA	5 lbs
Overall Length	8.7 inches
Overall Height	5.5 inches
Overall Width	1.4 inches
Barrel Length	5.0 inches
Sight Radius	6.5 inches
Weight w/Mag	41.6 ounces
Mag Capacity	9 Rounds (9mm), 8 Rounds (.38 Super, 40S&W)
Sights	Adjustable Target Sights
Grips	Custom Wood Grips
Frame Finish	Stainless
Slide Finish	Stainless
Accessory Rail	No
Features	Traditional Slide, Adjustable Target Sights
MSRP	\$1,213





No Escape, No Surrender

13 Tips On How To Defend Yourself
In Extreme Close Quarters

By Michael D'Angona



Missing key signs of danger
can lead to major trouble.

Many self-defense programs teach you techniques that can momentarily distract or disable an attacker, enabling you that split-second to escape and run to safety.

But what if you find yourself at home in a location where escape is not an option, a place where your attacker can trap you and block your only exit?

This is a very real and common scenario. Whether you live in a single-family home, a high-rise apartment building or a tiny studio, you may find yourself traveling through very tight or compact places many times throughout your day.

These space-restricted areas, unfortunately, are the perfect hiding places for an assailant to attack and cause you severe harm. In spite of this fact, a conflict doesn't have to end in tragedy for you, because unbeknownst to your attacker, you will not be a helpless victim.

You do have many options to survive at your disposal. Awareness, adaptable self-defense techniques and a touch of basic common sense could not only keep you safe, but teach your attacker he made a horrible mistake in targeting you.



An assault in your apartment building can happen in an instant.



Redirect your attacker's strike (above) and gouge his eye with your left hand. Secure his left arm and deliver a knee to the solar plexus (right).



While locking his arm, grab his neck and drive him into the wall.



While locking his right arm, pin him against the wall.



Finish with a palm strike and then move to safety as quickly as possible.

Photos by Michael D'Angona

COMMON SENSE TIPS

● 1. Your first priority before any confrontation occurs is to minimize your attacker's advantage by staying alert of possible "danger" situations and following some basic common sense rules.

The clichéd expression "Be aware of your surroundings" is constantly reinforced for a reason—it's vitally important to you staying alive and to avoid becoming a statistic on the evening news report.

● 2. Attackers prey on the weak or distracted. When you find yourself in a possibly dangerous location, always be alert of

what's happening all around you. Walk with your head high, constantly scanning your forward path, as well as side to side and behind you.

Stay off your phone when approaching your house at night. Don't fiddle through your purse or briefcase and never proceed if something "feels" strange. Your sixth sense, or gut, tells you the truth. Don't let your brain's reasoning or your heart's emotions convince you otherwise and override your natural instincts.

● 3. When entering the elevator to your apartment building, always stand close to the door and

to the control board. If someone enters who may appear to you to be out of place or suspicious due to their appearance (although you can't judge a book by its cover, it's better to err on the side of caution) you have the ability to immediately leave the elevator. If you position yourself to the back of the elevator, your ability to react in time to exit may be limited and the chances of escape will be severely shortened.

● 4. If you use your apartment's laundry room, avoid going during late hours. Use the facility when other people are present. Never stay in the room alone or when

there's only one other person present who may come across to you as suspicious or possibly dangerous. There's safety in numbers.

● 5. When approaching the front door of your home, be alert of possible places an attacker may be hiding. These could include thick bushes, blind corners or shadowed alcoves under stairways.

● 6. Always carry with you a personal alarm on your keychain and be ready to pull the quick release cord at the earliest sign of danger. Your keys also make great improvised weapons if

need be: grip them firmly in your hand and use as a jabbing weapon (to the eyes and face of your attacker) if the need may arise.

Again, it's better to be safe than sorry.

USE WHAT WORKS – DISCARD WHAT DOESN'T

Even with the many precautions that you may take to avoid a dangerous situation, there may be a time when confrontation is inevitable and an attack occurs.

No matter if you have had extensive martial arts training or no experience whatsoever in self-defense, there are some techniques that should be used

within close-quarter defense and others that should be ignored due to their ineffectiveness in tight or constricted places. Let's take a look.

● 7. First and foremost, high kicks, even to the waist level of your assailant, should be avoided. Limited space will lessen the power of the impact and leave you off balance should your attacker rush you at the same time as you execute your kick.

● 8. Instead, when your attacker is within a few feet or even a few inches of you, focus your energy into a knee strike to your

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attacker's groin or midsection. This will shock him and enable you to escape his grip and flee or follow up with additional strikes.

● 9. Wide-swinging round-house style punches and other "telegraphed" strikes are very ineffective in close quarters. Keep your counter-offensive limited to short, quick and focused strikes to your attacker's vital areas. These areas include his eyes, the bridge of his nose, his groin, and his throat, as well as his finger joints if you're able to secure them.

These attacks don't require a great amount of strength to execute and can momentarily stun or incapacitate your assailant allowing you time to escape. If grabbed, which is a common scenario for both men and women, your chances of survival are actually greater than you may think. With your attacker's arms occupied on securing your body, your main weapons (arms and legs) are free to let loose a barrage of offensive self-defense moves.

● 10. Keep in mind, a nonstop attack with short precise strikes can do more damage and keep your attacker off balance than trying to land one solid knock-out shot.

USE YOUR ENVIRONMENT TO YOUR ADVANTAGE

● 11. Just as an attacker may assume he has the upper hand by trapping you in a confined space,

you too can use the compact area around you to gain an advantage.

For example, if you find yourself assaulted while walking up or down a stairway, use the uneven surface to off-balance your opponent. During his initial lunge or advance toward you, don't resist his advance with strength. Instead, increase his oncoming energy by pulling or pushing his body (depending upon whether he drives you back or grabs you toward him) quickly in the same direction of his advance. With your assailant's attack not meeting the resistance he expected, his body movement will continue unimpeded, causing him to fall hard on the stairs. This will allow you time to make your escape.

● 12. Compact areas, such as an elevator or a tight hallway, can also be used to help inflict damage upon an attacker. If you're unexpectedly grabbed, try to turn your body so you and your attacker are both in contact with the wall. Then with your free hand push your attacker's head forcibly against the hard surface and continue until he lets go of his grip. This can do severe damage, especially if you're able to target his face, which has many fragile and sensitive vital areas.

● 13. Finally, there may be items around you that could be used to form a makeshift barrier between you and your attacker. Garbage cans outside of your home, chairs or stools inside, or

even a laundry cart or basket can be used to momentarily block an attack.

PRACTICE "REAL LIFE" SCENARIOS

As with anything else in life, personal self-defense becomes natural and instinctive through repetitive practice. Several styles of martial arts and self-defense classes are usually available nearby to where you live. If so, stop in and watch a class. If your interest is peaked, ask to try a free class. You may quickly find one that interests you; if not, continue your search until you locate the right class that fits your particular needs.

Through continued practice, you will find yourself feeling more confident physically as well as mentally. There are no guarantees in life or in self-defense specifically, but your chances of surviving a close-quarter attack will certainly be increased with "hands-on" training in a reputable martial arts dojo or self-defense class. **HD**

Michael D'Angona is a freelance writer, fifth-degree black belt and self-defense instructor. He teaches in Coral Springs, Florida.

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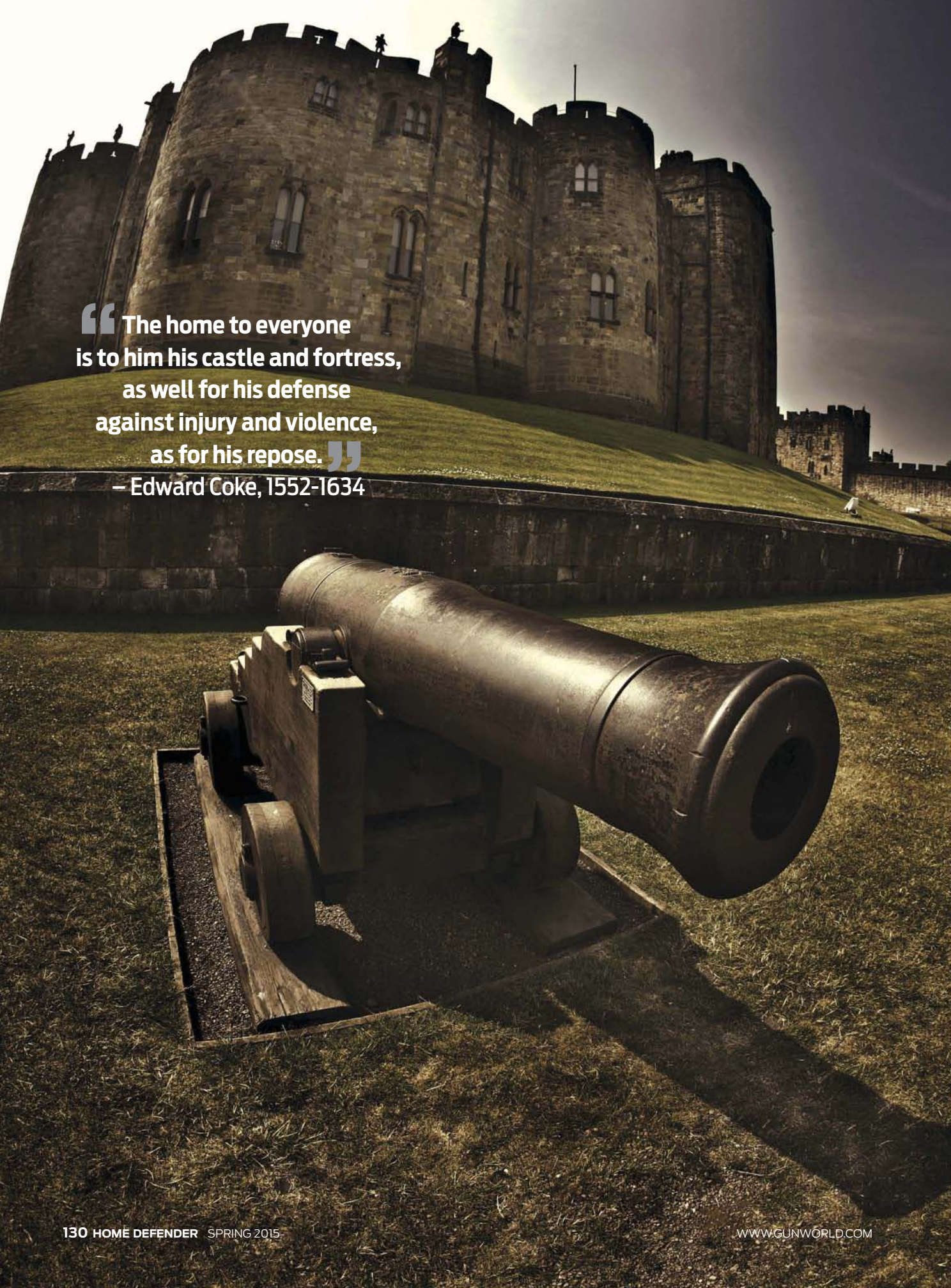
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is to him his castle and fortress,
as well for his defense
against injury and violence,
as for his repose. ”**

— Edward Coke, 1552-1634

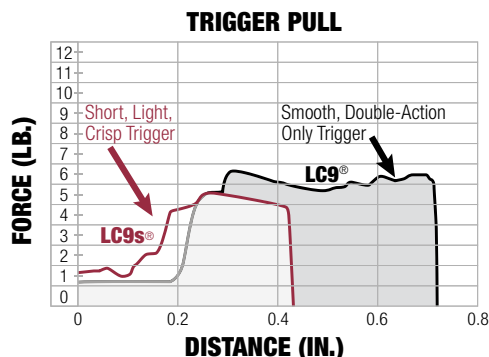


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